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PRIME LIVING

JULY/AUGUST 2010

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MASTERS OF *wine*

TEXAS'S MASTER SOMMELIERS DISH ON WHAT IT TAKES TO LIVE UP TO THE TITLE

34 | *reservations required*

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DISCOVER TRADITION, MYSTERY AND BEAUTY AT THIS SOUTHEAST ASIA GEM

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ON THE COVER

Executive Chef Peter Lauer oversees Table One, a unique chef's table experience at the InterContinental Houston Near the Galleria Hotel. Photographed by Mark Lipczynski on April 30, 2010.

PRIME LIVING

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PUBLISHER'S *note*

KARYN DEAN
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

"IT'S THAT HUMBLING, DRIVING DESIRE FOR CREATING AMAZINGLY DELICIOUS DISHES THAT KEEPS ME TUNING IN EACH WEEK"

I can't begin to tell you how excited I was when I realized that "Hell's Kitchen" has returned for yet another season. The show isn't just about Chef Ramsey's infamous kitchen tirades, however, or about charred chicken and soggy risotto. Rather, it's about the spirit of those dedicated individuals who are driven by their passion for food.

It's that humbling, driving desire for creating amazingly delicious dishes that keeps me tuning in each week and what has made our feature story on local chef's tables one of the best we've ever done. Be sure to "tune in" on page 34 to find out what your favorite chefs are doing with their private dining tables.

In this special Food & Wine issue, you're sure to find something that looks good enough to eat right off the page or sounds so good that you find yourself drooling just reading about it!

To find out where burgers—of all kinds—are king, check out Hot List on page 16. Want something buzzy to share at your Fourth of July party? Try Deep Eddy Sweet Tea Vodka, made with sweet sugar from right here in little ole Sugar Land. Read all about it on page 15. If wine is more your liking, discover the answers to the burning questions posed to Texas's four master sommeliers beginning on page 27. If you're still in need of a vino fix, get a taste of the vintages from Ampelos Cellars on page 51.

Looking for a quick weekend away? Look no further than our own backyard. Galveston Island has rebounded, and hotels and businesses are ready to cater to your every wish! Check out page 13 for interesting and unique places to visit, including my personal recommendations: the Tremont House Hotel for a great weekend stay and Diamond Beach, where you can relax by a lazy river and end the night with a nightcap at Bar None.

For our *Prime Living* Click List, we compiled some great food and wine websites. My favorite is roadfood.com, where you can name the city or town you are traveling to and you'll instantly get a list of highway diners and eateries along the way. You'll even get a "must eat" for each listing. As Julia Child would say, bon appétit!

Karyn

kdean@prime-living.com

We got such a "kick" out of attending the Top Hat & Tennies event for the Houston Junior Forum in April. Especially from those that decorated their favorite pair of sneakers! See more of their photos on our new website launching in July or at facebook.com/primeliving.

COMING UP

The Design Issue:
From coastal living to down-home-on-the-ranch comfort, be amazed and inspired by some of Texas's most beautiful homes.

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Somewhere out there, a 911 just did a double-take.

The new 2011 Cayenne has been completely reengineered to resemble only one thing: nothing you've ever seen before. Catch a glimpse, and see each of its lines redrawn to connect more strongly to over 60 years of racing legend. Enter its more luxurious interior, and be quickly reminded of how that legend lives on, as it takes your breath away while using less fuel. So come in for a test drive. The all-new 2011 Cayenne feels as great as it looks. Porsche. There is no substitute.

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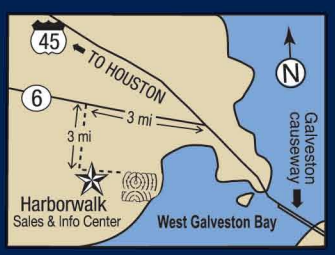

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cocktails & conversation.

THE **PRIME LIVING** GUIDE TO WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

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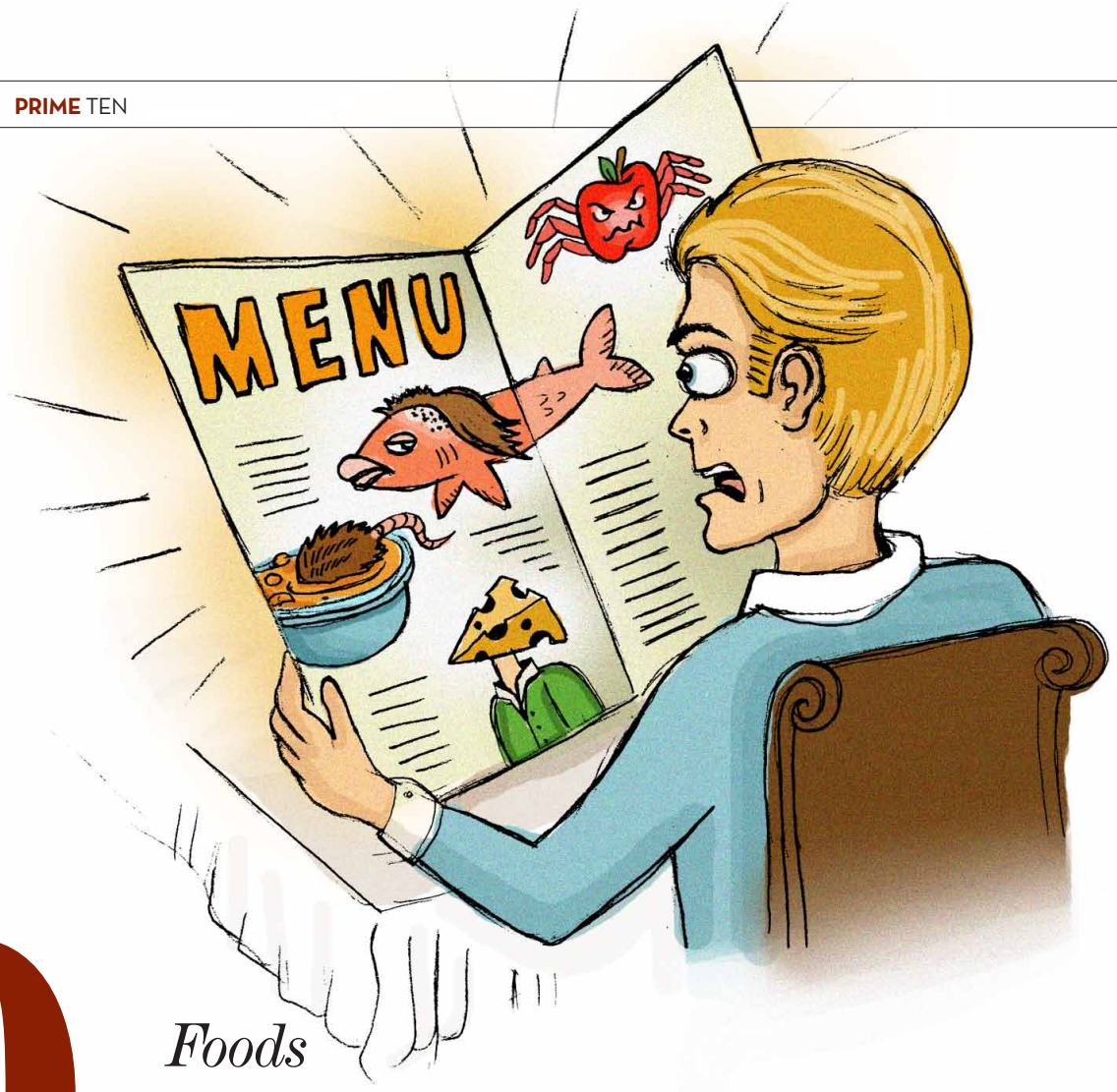


10 *Foods* Lost in Translation

Story | SALLY J. CLASEN *Illustration* | PAUL SVANCARA

Normally, you know what you're eating based on the name of a food. If you order chicken noodle soup, for example, you know it contains chicken, noodles and soup. But sometimes, the label doesn't synch with the ingredients. Here are 10 silly gastronomic monikers that give you food for thought:

ONE **Sweetbreads.** Animal organ fare that is rich in flavor, but half-baked. The only bread is the coating, although it does have a lot of heart—and throat, stomach and pancreas.

TWO **Chicken-fried steak.** OK, Texans, you're thinking, "Where's the beef?" But in actuality, we're the ones responsible for hatching a cuisine misnomer that tastes like cow, but screams "fowl."

THREE **Geoduck.** Don't worry, GMC isn't trying to deliver a restyled compact car to your table. It's something far more marketable and sexy: It's the king of clams, considered an aphrodisiac.

FOUR **Crab apples.** Not to be confused with those upbeat happy apples, maybe this ornamental variety has some repressed orchard anger?

FIVE **Rocky Mountain oysters.** An appetizer that falls completely off the food origin grid because, geographically speaking, they are not sourced from Colorado or the sea. Discuss.

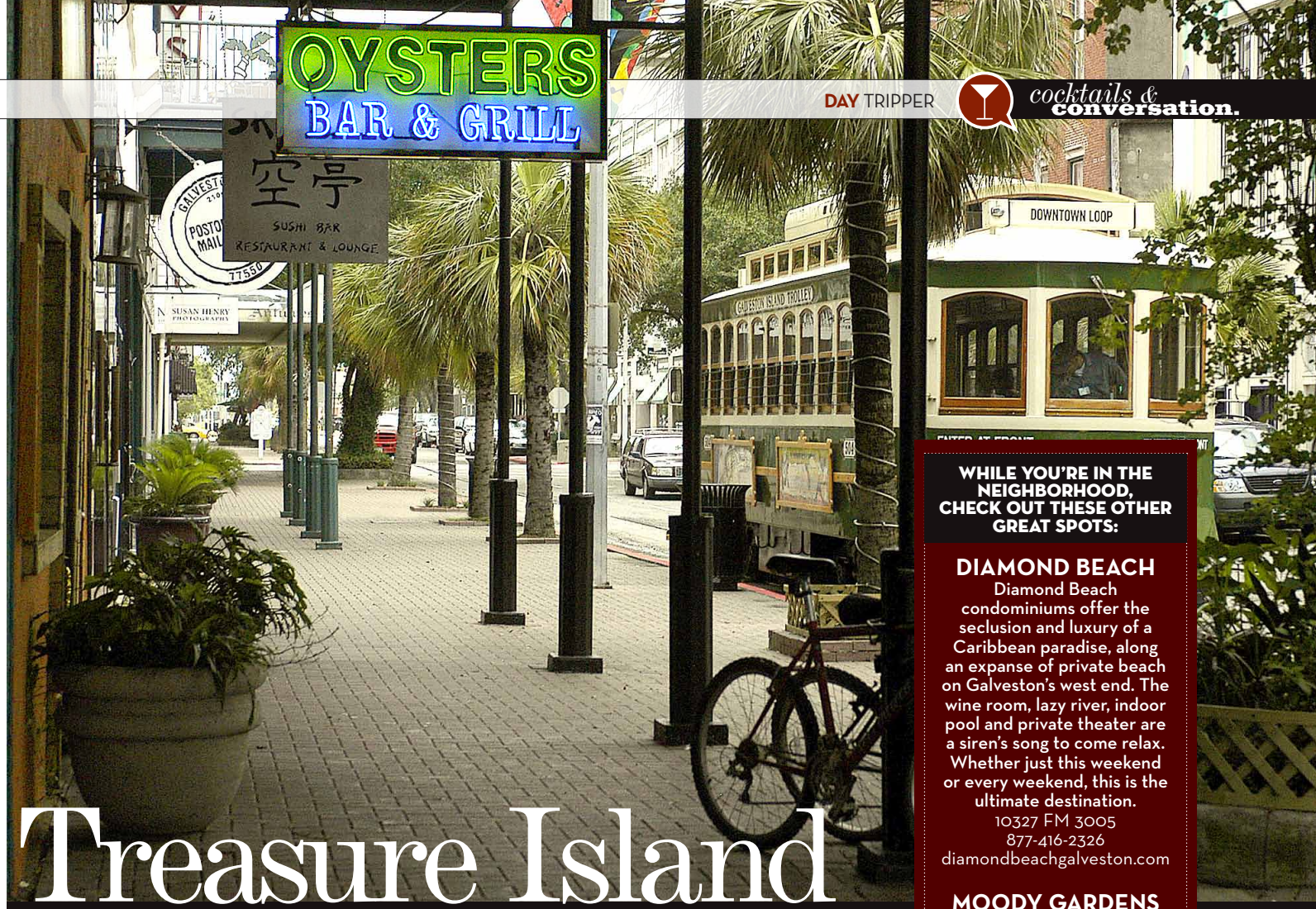
SIX **Ziti.** It's difficult to pass on a plate of baked pasta dripping in sour cream, cheese and tomato sauce, but something about a reference to acne takes on a whole new cuisine complexion.

SEVEN **Head cheese.** Face it, someone with a concussion coined the term because any way you slice this cold cut, it does not produce a food group that pairs well with wine.

EIGHT **Mullet fish.** Even in coastal waters, sometimes it's business in the front, party in the back.

NINE **Ratatouille.** Ooh la la, the otherwise lyrical French serve up a creepy translation with their steaming bowl of vegetables that means "chunky stew," but sounds like "fat rodent."

TEN **Eggplant.** Chew on this cracked concept: It's a mixed-up fruit that's a distant cousin to tobacco.



Treasure Island

Story | JEAN CIAMPI

Like the sun rising over the Gulf, Galveston Island has once again emerged from the waters of another hurricane, returning stronger and more elegant than ever before. One look around and you'll see fresh, new sand blanketing the island's beaches, luring back tourists and sun-worshippers, while in town, doors are open and the welcome signs are out.

A true model of resiliency, the historic Hotel Galvez prepares to celebrate its 100th anniversary next year with new, spa-inspired rooms throughout the entire sixth floor. The plush, pure-air rooms and meeting areas provide a soothing environment 99 percent free of dust, pollen and viruses.

The Tremont House, which first opened near The Strand in 1839, has never looked better after an amazing first-floor face lift. The new marble flooring, furniture and woodwork now replace the damage from several feet of water during Hurricane Ike, but retail the historic elegance for which the hotel is known. Even the ghost on the hotel's fourth floor must surely be impressed!

With the storm clouds passed, the island experience is filled with art and entertainment, history and shopping, sunshine and water fun. Antique stores, museums and historic home tours showcase a proud past, while art walks in July and August capture Galveston's flare for the future.

Schlitterbahn, surfing lessons and stretches of beaches sporting new umbrellas, pavilions and concessions are drawing those with a love affair with the water, while Bands on the Sand concerts and fireworks fill the night. For the movie buff, classic flicks are shown under the stars on The Strand.

For an authentic Galveston Island experience, stop by the famous Murdoch's. Originally built in the late 1800s, the shop has seen and endured its share of storms over the years, only to return better than before. Things are also buzzing at Mosquito Café, an eclectic little bistro tucked in Galveston's historic East End. And where the majestic oak trees once stood as stalwart sentinels around the island, 20 whimsical sculptures have been carved from the trunks of the trees lost to Ike as if to give the island the last laugh at Mother Nature.

With old and new favorites back in the swing, Galveston is once more the grand dame of the Gulf Coast.

GALVESTON ISLAND VISITORS CENTER
2328 BROADWAY • 888-425-4753
GALVESTON.COM

WHILE YOU'RE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, CHECK OUT THESE OTHER GREAT SPOTS:

DIAMOND BEACH

Diamond Beach condominiums offer the seclusion and luxury of a Caribbean paradise, along an expanse of private beach on Galveston's west end. The wine room, lazy river, indoor pool and private theater are a siren's song to come relax. Whether just this weekend or every weekend, this is the ultimate destination.
10327 FM 3005
877-416-2326
diamondbeachgalveston.com

MOODY GARDENS

From 1845 to 1924, Galveston was a portal for immigrants and known as the second Ellis Island. Through September, Moody Gardens hosts the travelling exhibit, "Forgotten Gateway: Coming to America Through Galveston Island." Dynamic and engaging, it tells the stories of lives starting over and traces the roots of our heritage.
One Hope Blvd.
800-582-4673
moodygardens.com

THE GRAND 1894 OPERA HOUSE

Julio Iglesias, Gladys Knight and Frank Sinatra Jr. are just part of a schedule exploding with star power at The Grand 1894 Opera House, with "Spamalot," "The Color Purple" and "Tuna Christmas" adding the flavor of Broadway. A testament to Galveston's tenacity and refinement, The Grand promises a season that lives up to its name.
2020 Postoffice St.
409-765-1894
thegrand.com

GALVESTON ISLAND CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

beauty WITHOUT RULES

World-renowned architect Frank Gehry is famous for such awe-inspiring structures as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the Dancing House in Prague, and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. But it's his designs for the exclusive Tiffany & Co. that has the design world buzzing.

Constructed of concrete, Gehry flexes his design acumen with a collection of bangles and rings in his signature torque design that "echoes the twists and gently curved surfaces of his architectural triumphs." Pieces are steel in color and tinged with sterling silver, reminiscent of masonry structures. The jewelry reflects the kinetic rhythm and spontaneity of his sketches and models.

"For me, design is about the process," Gehry says. "Sketching and shaping three-dimensional models and conceptualizing different possibilities—this is the essence of creating, whether in architecture or jewelry."

The new collection is available at select Tiffany & Co. stores. Call the Galleria location at 713-626-0220 or visit tiffany.com for information.

Astros owner Drayton McLane with Rusk Elementary School students.

play BALL!

Nothing says summer more than a day at the ballpark. If you find there's nothing better than whiling away a steamy summer day cheering on your Houston Astros, then head out to Minute Maid Park to catch all the action. Thanks to a number of special promotions, fans will be able to take advantage of ticket options ranging from discounted concessions to free tickets.

One popular program returning this season is the "Kids Free All Summer" offer, which gives families the opportunity to receive two free tickets for children 14 and under for every purchase of one full-price adult ticket in designated seating areas.

The program kicked off in May when Astros chairman and CEO Drayton McLane announced the program at a press conference. Joined by shortstop Tommy Manzella and pitcher Chris Sampson, McLane rewarded students from nearby Rusk Elementary School with free tickets for their performance in the classroom.

For information on Kids Free All Summer and other ticket programs, visit astros.com.

RANDOM ACTS OF *kindness*

Even though the social season is on hiatus this summer, you still can give back to your favorite causes through the One-in-a-Million campaign, a new philanthropic effort whose mission is to perform and inspire one million good deeds and acts of kindness in the city of Houston. According to Brian James Figat, executive director of The Encouragement Project, anyone who does a good deed will be able to submit his or her story to the website, which will be added to a running tally.

In addition to helping those who need it, the goal is to encourage residents to "think more positively and make [Houston] a better place to live." For information, visit encouragehouston.org.

Messenger figure

SIMPLY DIVINE

Making its U.S. debut at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston is "Dynasty and Divinity: Ife Art in Ancient Nigeria," a unique exhibit showcasing rare African sculptures made between the 9th and 15th centuries in Ife, an ancient city-state in west Africa. More than 100 copper, terra cotta and stone sculptures will be on display—all shining examples of highly developed techniques in brass and copper casting.

According to Frances Marzio, MFAH curator of the Glassell Collections, the sculptures were first excavated in 1910, with more being discovered in 1938, when builders laying the foundation of a house in Nigeria discovered the cast-metal heads buried in the earth. London's *Guardian* has compared the extraordinary find to the discovery of the Terracotta Army, the Parthenon and the mask of Tutankhamen.

The exhibit will coincide with the opening of the museum's newly reinstalled African art galleries. With a collection that spans 2,500 years, the expanded gallery will hold items from Nigeria's Nok culture of 1000 B.C. to the early 20th century.

"Dynasty and Divinity" makes its national and Houston debut on Sept. 19 and runs through Jan. 9, 2011. For information, visit mfah.org.

STEPHEN O'BRIEN / HOUSTON ASTROS | KARIN L. WILLIS / MUSEUM FOR AFRICAN ART/FUNDACIÓN MARCELINO BOTÍN | © TIFFANY & CO.

Sam Saddle Bag Lunch

form & function

Speaking of dynamic design, *17, the modern American bistro located inside the Alden-Houston hotel, is offering their version of "one square meal."

The Sam Saddle Bag Lunch features a choice of four courses served in a fun and functional compartment tray. Enjoy soup, salad and an entrée, including a chicken ciabatta sandwich, pecan-smoked flat iron steak or crispy snapper. Then polish off your meal with a delicious dessert.

The concept of functional art continues through to dinner, when you can order what's described as the "Eiffel Tower" of food. Designed for sharing, stylish presentations of such favorites as the crab cake, slow-baked salmon and the cowboy rib eye with Texas spice rub and Sam Houston bourbon sauce.

Lunch is served daily from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., while dinner is served from 5:30 to 10 p.m. daily. *17 is located at 1117 Prairie in downtown Houston. For information, visit 17food.com or call 832-200-8800.

PL'S CLICK LIST

Our favorite food and wine sites

wineenthusiast.com	chow.com
opentable.com	foodbuzz.com
foodietours.com	epicurious.com
dishanddine.com	roadfood.com
cookstr.com	eatwellguide.org

Clayton Christopher and Chad Auler, co-founders, Deep Eddy Sweet Tea Vodka

In DEEP

Once you've polished off that burger, wash it down with—what else?—an ice-cold glass of iced tea.

This summer, however, the official drink of the South just got a boost thanks to the folks at Deep Eddy, an Austin-based vodka distiller that has created—ready for this?—a sweet tea vodka made from real brewed tea.

Oh, and it gets better. Deep Eddy Sweet Tea Vodka isn't only made from hand-picked black teas leaves, water from an aquifer deep beneath Texas Hill Country and honey from Austin's Good Flow Honey Co. It's also made with 100 percent cane sugar from our own backyard: Sugar Land, Texas.

"There's Texas pride in every bottle," says Deep Eddy co-founder Chad Auler.

The company has also released a number of summer cocktails that can be made with the vodka, including the Beach Club, made with club soda and a splash of orange-flavored liqueur, and the Sweet Betty, made with Chambord and a splash of lemon.

Deep Eddy Sweet Tea Vodka retails for $20.99 and can be found in select restaurants and liquor stores, including Specs and Twin Liquors. For information, visit deepeddyvodka.com.

Black Bean Burger

Amazon Burger

BURGER kings

Story | KARL HAUENSTEIN

Is there a more guilty pleasure than our love for the hamburger? Indeed, this uniquely American concoction of ground meat, bread, crispy vegetables and condiments has earned its place as America's favorite meal. For a taste of the Bayou City's top burgers, this month's Hot List will leave you hungry for more.

LAURENZO'S GRILLE

At Laurenzo's, it's all about the Dom Burger, a one-third pound serving of prime beef topped with hot capocollo, mozzarella cheese, roasted red peppers, brown mustard and spicy chile mayo. No further accolades required.

4412 WASHINGTON AVE.
713-880-5111
LAURENZOS.NET

STRIP HOUSE

The Strip Burger is nothing fancy, just a perfectly grilled meat patty garnished with the traditional lettuce, tomatoes and onions, your choice of cheese, with Dijon mustard and mayonnaise on the side, served on a grilled sourdough bun. Delicious and quite possibly the perfect burger.

1200 MCKINNEY
713-659-6000
STRIPHOUSE.COM

Strip Burger

AMAZON GRILL

Having amply demonstrated their formidable culinary chops with Churrasco's and Americas, the Cordua family's venture into casual dining offers a more than worthy burger. Case in point, the Amazon Burger featuring provolone cheese, smokey-flavored mustard and jalapeno mayo. And don't forget the signature, all-you-can-eat plantain chips on the side.

5114 KIRBY DRIVE
713-522-5888
CORDUA.COM

American Kobe Beef Burger

MOCKINGBIRD BISTRO

For sheer burger decadence, nothing beats Mockingbird Bistro's American Kobe Beef Burger. At lunchtime, this delicious offering is simply garnished with pickled red onions and white cheddar or Stilton cheese, while at dinnertime, they add seared foie gras and truffle pommes frites.

1985 WELCH ST.
713-533-0200
MOCKINGBIRDBISTRO.COM

HOBBIT CAFÉ

On those rare occasions when you crave a fine burger, but don't want beef, this is the one to try. The Hobbit Café serves a number of non-meat burgers, but the Black Bean Burger is, in our opinion, the best. Come hungry, because in addition to being delicious, they are enormous. And don't leave your confirmed carnivore friends at home—they also serve traditional meat burgers that are worthy of any burgerphile's affections.

2243 RICHMOND
713-526-5460
THEHOBBITCAFE.COM

BEN KHOO | AMAZON GRILL | PATTERSON & MURPHY PR | JACK THOMPSON

Houston DECONSTRUCTED

GET THE **ANSWERS** TO YOUR BURNING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BAYOU CITY

Story | BARBARA FULENWIDER

Q AROUND WHAT TIME DID EUROPEAN ANCESTORS OF NATIVE-BORN HOUSTONIANS FIRST ARRIVE?

The great wave of German immigration that started in 1844 had tapered off by 1850. The Irish immigration to Houston paralleled the Germans as they also arrived in the late 1840s and early 1850s. In 1855, a shipload of Polish, Bohemian and Swiss immigrants arrived along with 700 Poles, which the *Semi-Weekly Telegraph* reported arrived "all dressed in their national costumes." Among them were French, German and Czech, which added to the town's melting pot.

Q HOW DID THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS INTO THE UNION HELP START THE CIVIL WAR?

Northerners thought the annexation of Texas was an extension and perpetuation of slavery, while Southern congressmen threatened to leave the Union if Texas was not admitted. U.S. Sen. Sam Houston was a moderate who voted against the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act, which would have allowed slavery in the territories of those two states. He was the only senator from the South to do so and he was pilloried for it.

German immigrants

Q HOW AND WHEN DID FOLEY'S DEPARTMENT STORE START?

It all began with the William L. Foley's Dry Goods store, which was established in 1876 in the 1200 block of Congress. It was in a two-story building typical of retail establishments that provided goods to Houstonians in the 19th century. The Irish-born Foley sent for his nephews, James and Pat, when their father died in Ireland. The two boys entered the business in 1900 and by the 1940s, Foley's was Houston's major department store.

Foley's hat department

Q HOW DID M.T. JONES CHANGE HOUSTON'S FUTURE?

Martin Tilford Jones was a businessman who came from Tennessee to Dallas and started a lumber business in nearby Terrell, Texas. In 1883, he and his wife moved to Houston, where he opened the M.T. Jones Lumber Co. with two sawmills and lumberyards across the state. In 1898, M.T. Jones died and his will called for his nephew Jesse Jones to leave Dallas and manage the company's Houston holdings. Jesse Jones was 24 years old and during his 54 years in Houston, became a major force. So through his will, M.T. Jones changed Houston's future forever.

Q WHAT WAS THE TYPICAL CULINARY FARE IN HOUSTON BEFORE YANKEES INVADED VIA SHELL OIL IN 1970?

Because the two most prominent ethnic groups in Texas were most likely Mexicans and Germans, restaurant offerings were primarily chicken-fried steak or chicken or Tex-Mex. With the influx of New Yorkers and numerous others seeking the jobs that Shell Oil sought to fill, the types of restaurants greatly expanded and offered far more sophisticated fare, which today is judged by many to be among the best.

Authentic Mexican cuisine

Have a burning question about life in Houston? E-mail your curious inquiries to askhouston@prime-living.com.

SLOANE GALLERY | PUB-NIGHT.COM | GOETHE INSTITUTE

Rock Star

Story | JOHN DEMERS *Photography* | BRIAN BOOKWALTER

When Joel Bartsch was growing up in Bellaire, it's a safe bet that, from time to time, his mother thought the boy had rocks in his head. If she indeed did think that, as it turns out, she was mostly right.

Bartsch spent many a summer day wandering through the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) after playing a round of golf in Hermann Park. When he got older, he accepted his first real job at HMNS as a security guard. These days, Bartsch is still in charge of the museum's security—the security of its legacy—making sure it's a fun place to visit (especially during these hot summer months) and as a visionary partner in the entire Houston Museum District.

"I think every kid at one point falls in love with rocks, even if it's just for a few weeks," says Bartsch, president of HMNS and also its curator of gems and minerals. "Growing up in Houston—where everything beneath your feet is sand, mud and clay—I thought those crystalline shapes were amazing."

Bartsch has been seeing such things for most of his life and his entire career. Even his studies in theology at Concordia University in Austin added to his appreciation of nature's majesty. He earned his master's degree at Rice University and began his museum odyssey of 26 years that has included stints at such museums as the Colorado School of Mines, Texas Memorial in Austin, State Mining and Mineral Museum in California and the Lyman in Hilo, Hawaii, where, he says, natural science kept erupting all around him.

This summer, Bartsch is pleased to offer Houston all of HMNS's ongoing exhibits, including the renowned Wiess Energy Hall (perfect for the energy capital of the world) and surely his personal favorite, the Lester and Sue Smith Gem Vault, showcasing many of the world's finest cut and polished gems. The space is a dazzling echo of Bartsch's 2005 coffee-table book, "Masterpieces of the Mineral World."

Temporary exhibits this summer include one devoted to the science of magic that includes live magicians working the room and another about archaeopteryx, the 19th-century fossil that served as science's first important proof of Charles Darwin's theories.

"Science, when it became more mathematical maybe 150 years ago, became much more abstract and much more intimidating," Bartsch says. "What we try to do is go back to a thing that's awesome, a thing that's beautiful—the gee-golly-wow moment, we call it. Whether they're 9 or 90, we want people to see the beauty and the sheer awe of the natural world."

BESTBETS

IT'S MILLER TIME

When it's summer in Houston, it's time for one of the nation's most recognized outdoor entertainment resources. More nights than not, running into fall, Miller Outdoor Theatre offers great fun, ranging from opera to ballet to theater to concerts. In July, one tuneful sure thing is "Little Shop of Horrors" produced by Theatre Under The Stars, which started in the '60s at the Miller. milleroutdoortheatre.com.

SHAKESPEARE FEST

Although the immortal bard started out on the Avon River—not on Buffalo Bayou—William Shakespeare got here as soon as he could. Since 1975, he's been pretty happy in Houston, even in the summertime. This year's two Shakespeare offerings are "A Midsummer Night's Dream"—one of his most magical, most romantic comedies—and "Much Ado About Nothing," which we'd never say about this popular festival. Both are presented free at Miller Outdoor Theatre in August. houstonfestivalscompany.com

RUSSELL'S WEST

Along with Frederick Remington, Charles Russell was largely responsible for images of the Old West that we all carry with us. In the first major retrospective of his work, Museum of Fine Arts Houston lets Russell emerge as a singular talent: a painter, sculptor and humorist, who looked more deeply into his iconic cowboys and Indians than we might at first recognize. mfah.org.

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REVIEW "IN THE HEIGHTS" • BROADWAY ACROSS AMERICA

It was hard to watch "In the Heights," the Tony Award-winner brought to Houston by Broadway Across America, without pondering how far our culture has fallen since the days of this musical's alleged forebear, "Fiddler on the Roof." Only someone willing to imagine Tevye, the milkman, delivering his folk wisdom in the simplistic street prattle of rap can truly buy into the notion that this is any form of update, much less any form of improvement.

Make no mistake, "In the Heights" did have several things to admire. Generally, the characters were strong and sympathetic, a fact that surely explains much of its success. As the neighborhood (upper Manhattan's quirky Washington Heights) matriarch Abuela Claudia, Elise Santora delivered a series of admirable moments, particularly as she sought to pass on the lessons of her difficult life to youngsters. Those youngsters included Arielle Jacobs as Stanford scholarship student Nina; Shaun Taylor-Corbett as funny, coming-of-age street kid Sonny; and especially Kyle Beltran as ever-rapping pseudo-narrator Usnavi. It's Usnavi's road to commitment to the neighborhood of his birth, even as everything changes around him, which gives the narrative what forward motion it has.

Surely—and, yes, somewhat in the spirit of Fiddler's finest moments—some of the show's finest occur between Nina (who has stumbled during her freshman year and secretly dropped out) and her hard-working, all-sacrificing parents. Portrayed by Daniel Bolero and Natalie Toro, Kevin and Camila actually do reflect enough joys and sorrows from the American immigrant experience (not to mention the even-more-universal parent experience) that they ground the whole story in something of value.

One of the more intriguing twists in the plot involves the budding romance between Nina and Benny, affectively played by Rogelio Douglas Jr. Benny is the young African-American man who's learned everything he knows about the hired car business working for Nina's father. It would have been even more interesting had the script grappled directly with the interracial nature of their love, the apparent barriers between colors even in a neighborhood too packed for barriers to fit. The closest we get to Spike Lee here is Kevin declaring that Benny "doesn't know anything about our culture."

A neighborhood in which Hispanic kids grow up spewing rapper rhymes instead of Cervantes or Garcia Lorca might be a better-than-average place to find out. – JD

SPOTLIGHT: **18 HANDS GALLERY**

Opened in the fall of 2007, 18 Hands Gallery was formed thanks to the collaborative efforts of educational and non-profit arts initiatives such as the Clay Houston Festival and Empty Bowls Project. The goal of the gallery is to bring together the unique works of the area's finest clay artists in a unique and friendly way. Currently, more than 45 artists are on display at 18 Hands, which also hosts monthly exhibits featuring works by well-known and emerging guest artists. The gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

249B W. 19TH ST. • 713-869-3099 • 18HANDSGALLERY.COM

Ongoing

Magnificent Seven: Houston Celebrates Surls
Rice University, 6100 Main St. 713-348-6777, rice.edu/surls

Through July 25

Wicked
Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. $35 to $130. 800-745-3000, thehobbycenter.org

Through Aug. 8

Light of the Sufis: The Mystical Arts of Islam
Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. $7. 713-639-7300, mfah.org

Through Aug. 29

Charles M. Russell: The Masterworks in Oil and Bronze
Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. $7. 713-639-7300, mfah.org

July 10 to Sept. 4

Naked: Five Contemporary Ceramists
Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St. 713-529-4848, crafthouston.org

July 13-18

Little Shop of Horrors
Miller Outdoor Theatre, 6000 Hermann Park Drive. 8:15 p.m. Free. 281-823-9103, milleroutdoortheatre.com

July 22 to Aug. 1

Rent
Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. 800-745-3000, thehobbycenter.org

July 30 to Aug. 7

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Miller Outdoor Theatre, 6000 Hermann Park Drive. Free. 281-823-9103, milleroutdoortheatre.com

Events subject to change. Unless indicated, contact venue for exact show dates and times.

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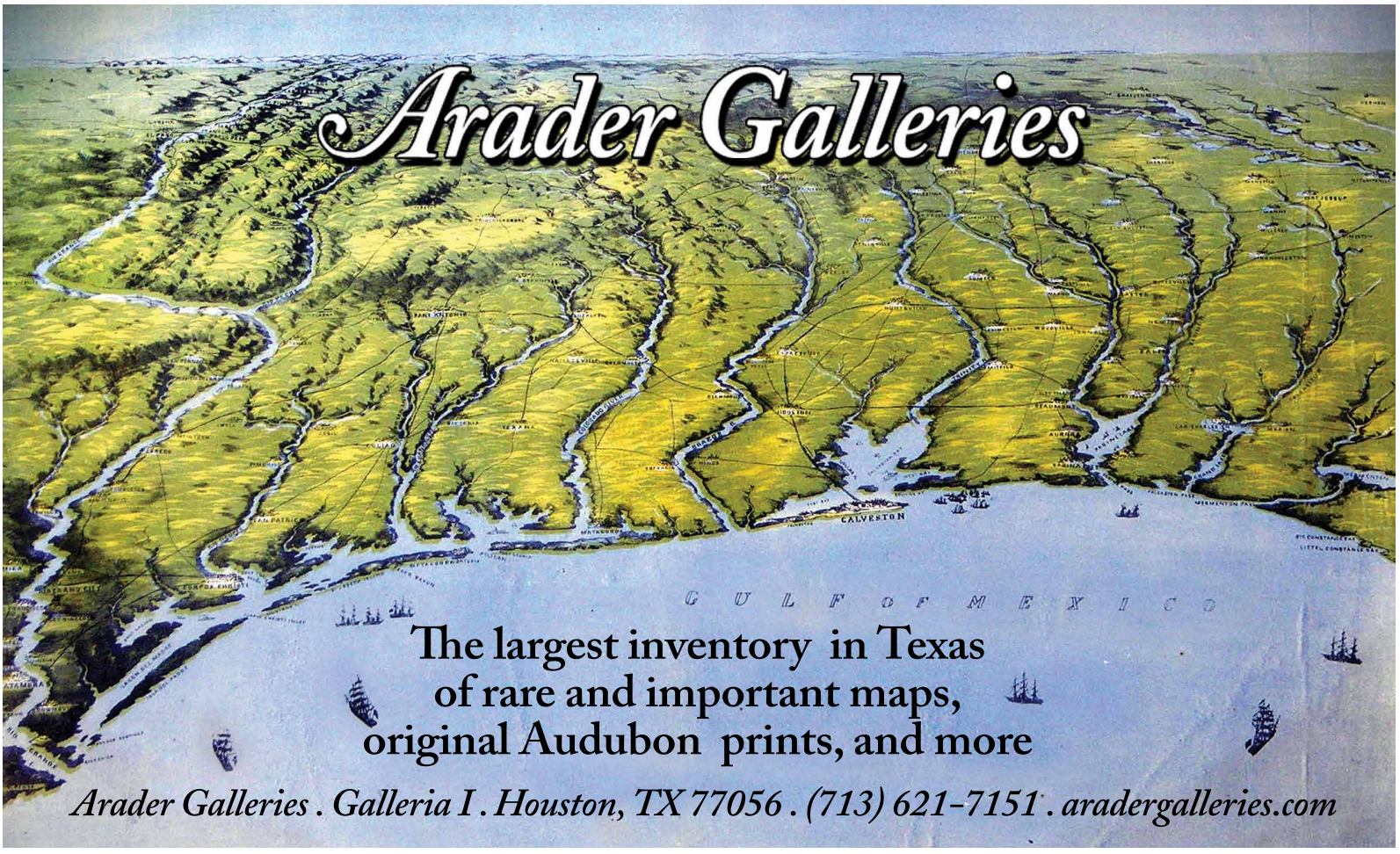

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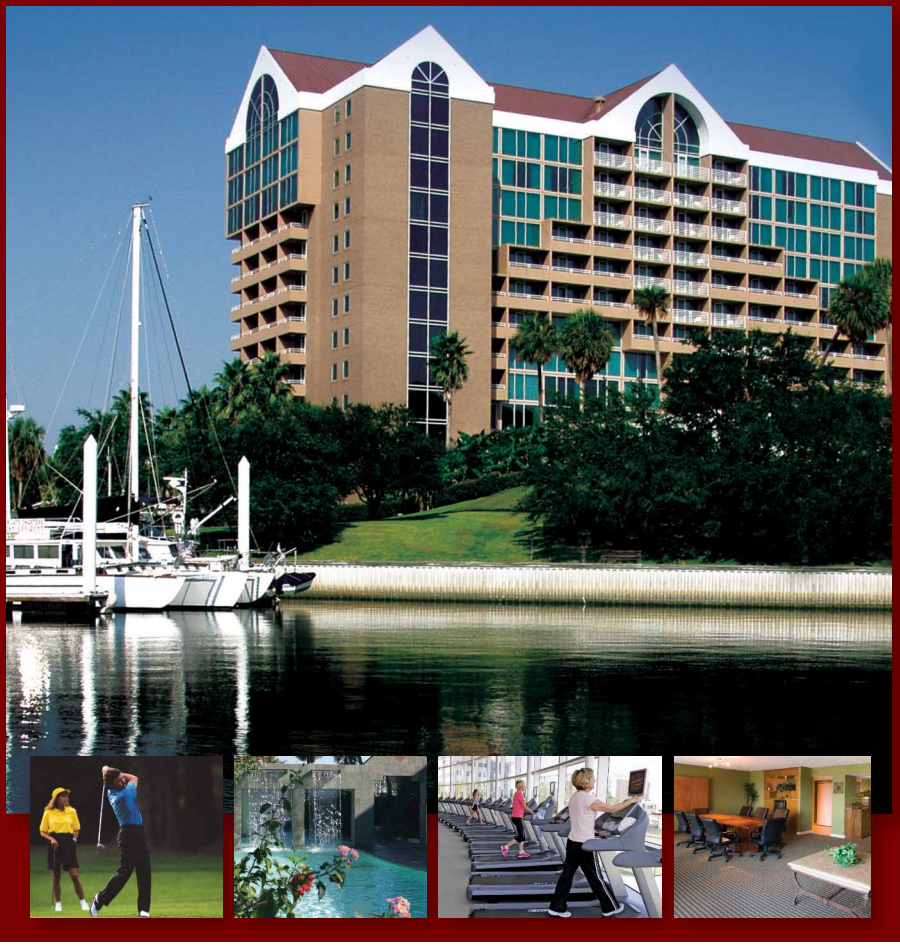

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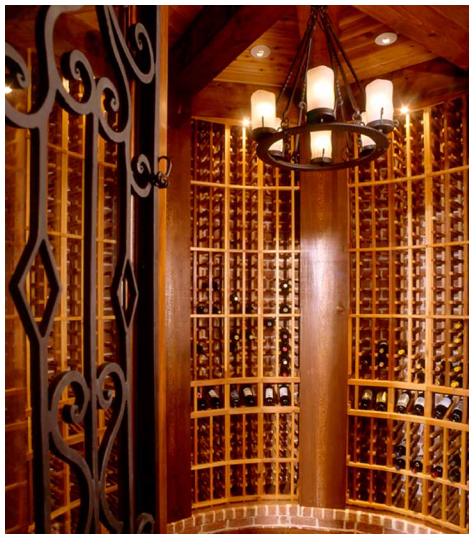
stellar CELLARS

Story | ALLISON BAGLEY



Sophisticated oenophiles and novice note-takers alike are opting for custom wine spaces—complete with storage, entertaining and presentation features—in the comfort of their home.

"A wine room creates a dramatic, unique space that can set a home apart," says Andy Suman, principal of local Röhe & Wright Builders. "Many custom home buyers request a wine room to provide an intimate entertaining area as an alternative to the formal dining room."

One such Houstonian designed his lavish Oak Forest home around a handcrafted circular wine room marked with a dramatic glass wrought iron door and an antique pine beam ceiling. Inside, more than 6,000 individual pieces of precision-cut, custom-milled cedar accent brick, pine columns, chestnut flooring and individual racking systems with halogen accent lighting. The climate-controlled space displays 2,500 bottles on enough shelving to support the collector's growing inventory alongside a table for four.

"We've see an increased interest in clients wanting to explore wines from various regions from their homes," says Suman, whose firm garnered a STAR award for the Oak Forest space from the Texas Association of Builders. "For people who love to entertain, cook and travel, wine becomes almost like a pastime. Just like kitchens have all the amenities and state-of-the-art appliances to prepare and enjoy meals, a wine cellar can be totally custom."

RÖHE & WRIGHT BUILDERS

WINE-OH!

Uncork the latest in accessories and accoutrements.

Lead-free titanium crystal wine glasses feature shape styles for maximum tasting potential, including the "brilliantly clear" Schott Zwiesel series, which comes with classic, contemporary and oversized bowls. There are five different shapes for wine (including one for sparkling and Champagne), plus water and martini cuts in the series. Starting at $59.50 for a set of six at Sur La Table. Visit surlatable.com for locations.

Knobstoppers are handcrafted in Nashville with hardwood-reinforced cork. From antique golf and pool balls, to old crystal door handles, the whimsically topped sturdy accessories keep opened bottles fresh. Vintage-inspired metal stoppers in the shape of a rose allow a small candle to burn atop wine and there are also monogrammed stoppers and fleur-de-lis finishes. Also on hand for pairing are cheese spreaders shaped like corks. Starting at $15 at Impromptu, 2358 Bissonnet. 713-807-9696, impromptuhouston.com

Also available in a hammered finish, this regal silver ice bucket will keep refreshing summer vintages cool for hours, even al fresco. $78 at More Than You Can Imagine.

Riedel's new Eve Decanter, named for the 300-year-old Austrian family business's matriarch, is mouth-blown by a trained European artisan into the shape of a cobra whose tail functions as the spout. The handcrafted artistic vessel holds nearly 50 ounces of wine, and an instructional DVD reveals such secrets as the specific direction for pouring and how to best clean and dry the showpiece. $495 at Neiman Marcus, 2600 Post Oak Blvd. 713-621-7100, neimanmarcus.com

For the Bordeaux-loving Boy Scout, this luxe horn pocketknife features a corkscrew for unexpected bottle moments on the go. $46 at More Than You Can Imagine, 2817 Westheimer. 713-668-8811, mtyci.com

Built under stairwells, adjacent to formal living spaces and at basement-level, custom wine spaces let homeowners learn about wine, store favorite bottles and host tastings with friends in an intimate setting away from the distractions in bustling restaurants and wine bars.

In addition to custom spaces, there are sophisticated systems that allow for proper handling at home, without the need to renovate.

Cuisinart's Private Reserve Wine Cellar, for example, is a compact countertop refrigeration model in stainless steel with a glass door that gives wine aficionados easy at-hand access to a smaller collection of eight or 16 favorite labels. Wines are preserved at ideal temperatures (39º to 68ºF) and a thermoelectric cooling system's settings are reflected on the touchpad LED control panel.

Along with freestanding and under-counter models, Viking makes a Full-Height Wine Cellar in a professional and designer series. Custom panels are also available in the 30-inch-tall appliance that lets you store up to 150 bottles in three distinct temperate zones. Pullout shelves fit half-size, standard and magnum bottles and two of the shelves become display areas if desired. Additional features include a UV-resistant tempered glass door and an alarm that sounds if interior temperatures climb too high.

Custom under-counter dishwashers and pullout dishwasher drawers for wine glasses are also popular for at-home use.

With a nose to custom finishes and special spaces, more space in homes is being dedicated to the sport of wine. Game on!

SUR LA TABLE | AARON GRAYUM | MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE | WINESTUFF.COM

BRENDA *valera*

R&D DIRECTOR, BLUE BELL CREAMERIES

Brenda Valera may have the greatest job ever. As the research and development director for Blue Bell Creameries, she gets *paid* to eat the state's favorite frozen treat and to churn out delicious creations such as Caramel Kettle Crunch, the newest flavor to hit the freezer section from the little creamery in Brenham.

Raised in Elgin, Texas, with a half-gallon of Blue Bell Homemade Vanilla in the freezer, Valera has ice cream down to a science. The registered dietician, who has a degree in food science and technology, has spent the past 30 years fine-tuning her taste buds and channeling her creativity into whipping up new flavors.

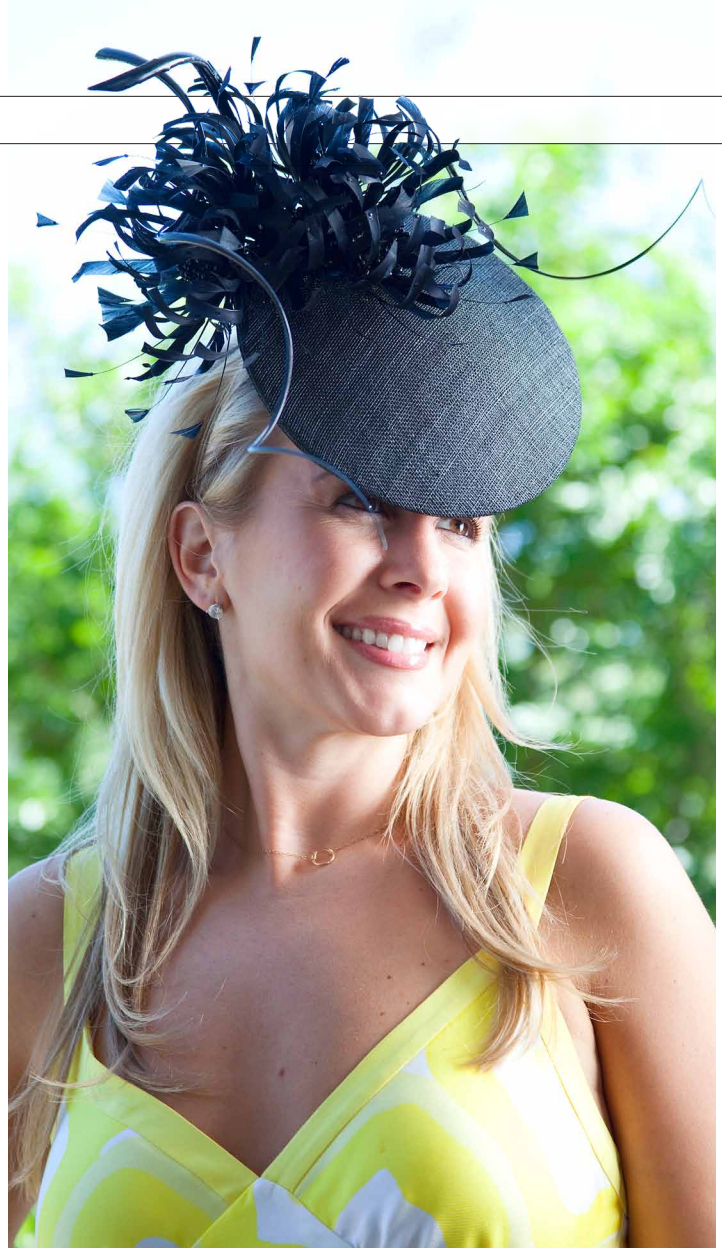
"There really is a lot of work that goes into choosing the right ingredients, and implementing new technology and engineering," she says. "There's a big difference between tasting and eating ice cream. When we taste a new flavor, we really have to concentrate and focus."

Valera admits that every idea hasn't been a hit. Although peanut butter and jelly had a surprisingly great taste, consumers couldn't seem to get past the name. Whereas Pecos Cantaloupe was popular, accessibility and processing hurdles with the cantaloupes gave that flavor a short lifespan.

For Valera, food isn't just her job, it's also her hobby. "I think for Brenda, her fun is digging into a new dessert and then translating the flavor into ice cream," says Bill Weiss, Blue Bell's public relations manager. "As an ice cream developer, she knows the specific scientific ways to make it turn out great."

She admits that, true to their advertising, they really do eat all they can and sell the rest. For Valera, even with an unlimited array of flavors to choose from, the Homemade Vanilla is still her favorite.

Story | JEAN CIAMPI *Photography* | BRIAN BOOKWALTER



Top Hats

Story | ROSEANN ROGERS *Photography* | MARK LIPCZYNSKI

Sure, hats can keep the sun away, but whether you're wearing a bonnet or a beret, hats are haute and are meant to make a statement. If you've ever gone to the Kentucky Derby or are planning on making it to any of the Triple Crown races in the near future, you know the hat always comes before the horse.

SWIRLS & CURLS

London milliner Philip Treacy recently made a stop at Neiman Marcus to showcase his latest collection of structured yet sophisticated hats. This black linen headpiece in a beret-like shape has an attached headband (not meant to be seen when worn) that's accented on the top with curled embellishments of trimmed feathers, wire with beaded tips and delicate spirals. $1,012 at Neiman Marcus, 2600 Post Oak Blvd. 713-621-7100, neimanmarcus.com

HAT CZECH

All of local designer Gabriela Dror's one-of-a-kind hats are handmade in the Czech Republic. Perfect for a Sunday brunch or a day at the track, this turquoise and white hat is made with 100 percent Sineway straw. $420 at gabrieladror.com.

TOPPING OFF

If you're looking for the perfect topper to wear to brunch with friends, out for a nightcap on a patio or just to cover up humidity-prone hair, Eric Javits offers this classic fedora. It's the perfect accoutrement to those wide-legged linen slacks or a breezy cotton dress. $198 at Nordstrom, 5192 Hidalgo St. 832-201-2750, nordstrom.com

WIDE ANGLE

With celebrity clientele including Julia Roberts, Laura Dern and Sarah Jessica Parker, designer Kokin knows a lot about making a fashion statement. This nude straw wide-brim hat with black brogan bow is perfect for a weekend at the beach or a getaway on a luxury cruise. $395 at Tootsies, 4045 Westheimer. 713-629-9990, tootsies.com

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MASTERS OF wine

They came, they saw, they poured. Texas's master sommeliers dish on what it takes to live up to the title.

Story | JOHN DEMERS *Photography* | JERRY POWERS

In the world of wine, from restaurants to retail stores, there are men and women who know enough to help us choose a bottle. Some of those are known, rightly or wrongly, as sommeliers. But only 105 in all of North America currently hold the honor of being called a master sommelier.

By sheer numbers, that would mean Texas should have no more than two at most, since nobody knows how to factor in Canada. But Texas didn't get that memo. The Lone Star State has four master sommeliers: Guy Stout with Glazer's, James Tidwell with the Four Seasons Las Colinas, and two with the Houston-born Pappas restaurant organization, Barbara Werley and Drew Hendricks.

We sat down with a glass—OK, three—with each of these professionals to determine whether this is such a big deal. As suspected, it is a very big deal.

drew HENDRICKS

DIRECTOR OF WINE AND BEVERAGE EDUCATION
PAPPAS RESTAURANTS

Why did you pursue certification as a master sommelier?
The master sommelier diploma was more of a personal goal for me. I pursued the diploma in order to build the base of my wine knowledge. I also feel that as the wine industry grows, people will need a way to set themselves apart, much like an MBA or a CPA.

What was the hardest part for you in earning this certification?
The blind tasting was the hardest part for me. It is an onerous task. Having to identify all of the aromatic and structural components, and then using them to deduce the country and region of origin, variety or varieties and vintage. It is a matter of building up your taste memory.

Do you have a first wine memory?
Not really. My first wine a-ha moment was with Domaine de la Romanee Conti Montrachet. It was an amazing experience.

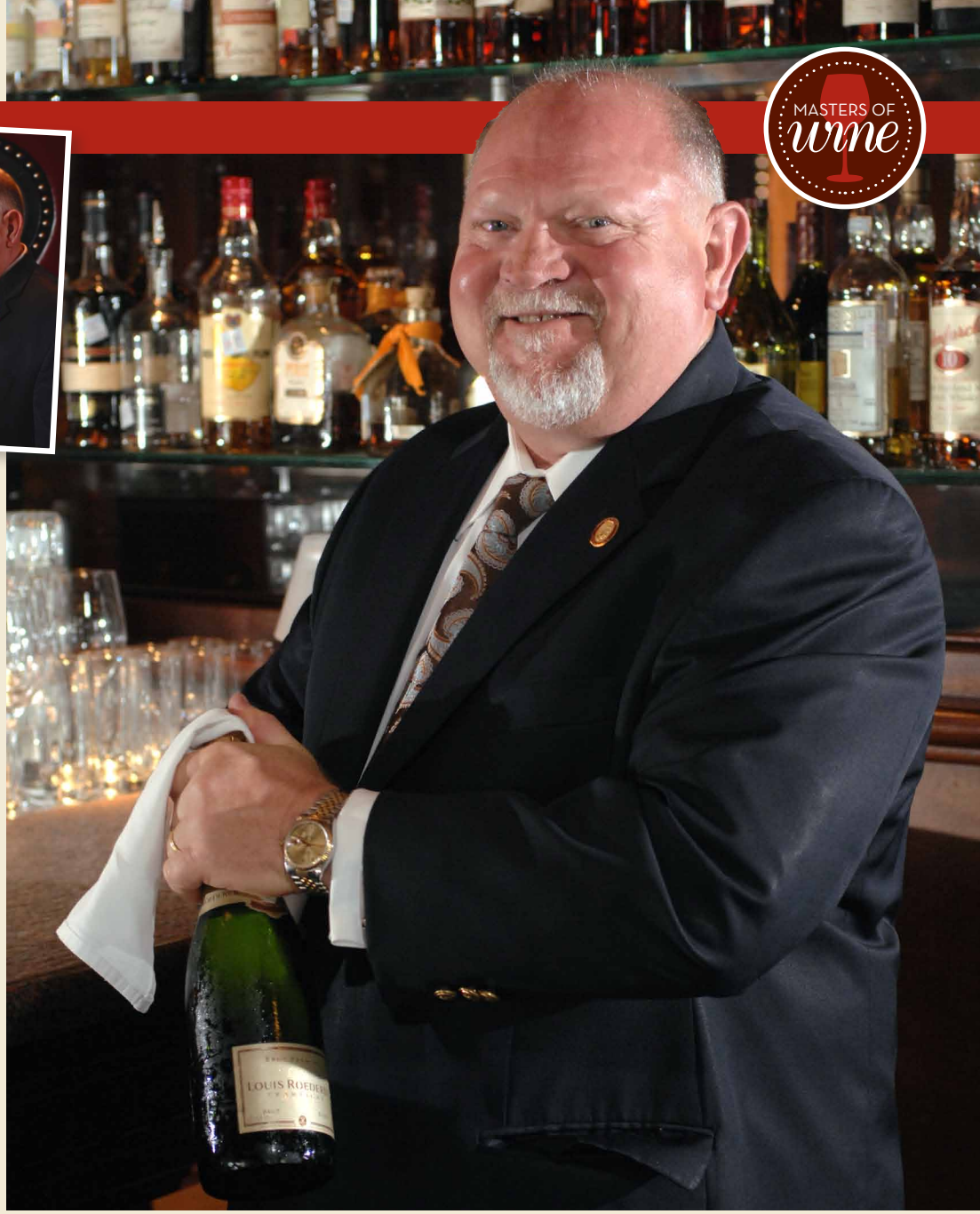
Is there a dream bottle you'd love to open that you've never tasted?
I would say that 1945 Domaine de la Romanee Conti would be a dream bottle. But really, any older red Grand Cru Burgundy would do the trick.

If you could only drink one more glass of wine, what would it be?
Only one more glass of wine is a hard question. No doubt it would be a German Riesling. Would be difficult to pick a producer, but it would be an Auslese.

Would you recommend any wines less than $10?
Absolutely, there are a lot of great values out there. Wines from Spain right now are amazing in all price categories.

What are the next hot wine regions, whether newly discovered/developed, or rediscovered by a new, wider audience?
I think you will see Greece, Slovenia and other Eastern European countries come to more of the forefront as they produce higher and higher quality wines. I would also submit that a wider audience will discover Austrian red wines.

For a long time, America was a nation of beer drinkers. Why are people loving wines more, drinking wines more and becoming more wine savvy?
Wine is becoming more and more approachable to most Americans. People are less hung up on wine being difficult to understand and hopefully we head more in this direction.



guy STOUT

CORPORATE DIRECTOR, BEVERAGE EDUCATION, **GLAZER'S FAMILY OF COMPANIES**

Why did you pursue certification as a master sommelier?
Being from Texas and not having any formal path for accreditation, I heard about the program while starting my studies for the master of wine program. Doug Frost, one of only three master sommeliers and masters of wine in the world, suggested I pursue it as well.

What was the hardest part for you in earning this certification?
The service part of the exam. I have not actively been on the floor of a restaurant since the late '70s, so I was a little rusty. The standards are extremely high. It is not just decanting and mechanical servicing of wine; it is the ease and style with which you present wine, while answering questions about vintages and producers from regions all over the world.

Do you have a first wine memory?
Drinking sangria at Tupannamba restaurant in Dallas as a teenager. My father allowed us to have a glass of wine on special occasions when we turned 15. Another memory was drinking Pommard on my 18th birthday at Dominque's. The owner sent it out. I was hooked.

Is there a dream bottle you'd love to open that you've never tasted?
Not really. I was fortunate enough to work at one of the top wine shops in the country while growing up in the business. So, I was able to taste all of the Grand Cru and first growths from the top estates. I have been extremely fortunate since passing the master sommelier exam to have friends who share their best wines in the cellar…a definite perk.

If you could only drink one more glass of wine, what would it be?
It would all depend on what the situation called for. Champagne comes to mind—never go wrong there—but it would have to be a big glass.

Would you recommend any wines less than $10?
Yes, there are a number of wines that I drink under $10. There are tremendous values in the wines from Chile, Argentina, Spain and Italy. Mezzacorona pinot grigio, Martin Codax albarino, Placido Chianti, Alamos malbec and Casillero del Diablo cabernet sauvignon come to mind. They are larger producers, but deliver in quality.

What are the next hot wine regions, whether newly discovered/developed, or rediscovered by a new, wider audience?
Napa Valley is figuring out what terroir and microclimate are about. The expressions from the different soils and exposures of the valley are a revelation, and you will see more of this in the future. Spain is on the rise with excellent wines and values ratio. Argentina is the worst kept secret in the wine world, while Chile is reinventing itself with more focus on quality. New Zealand pinot noir is starting to give them a one-two punch with the lovely sauvignon blanc they have been producing. And Texas wines are starting to stand out with world-class viognier, Rhone and Tempranillo blends.

barbara WERLEY

WINE DIRECTOR
PAPPAS BROS. STEAKHOUSE, DALLAS

Why did you pursue certification as a master sommelier?
It was a personal pursuit. When I started the process, there were only about 20 Americans who had passed and no Internet. We didn't have a big support network. It was definitely an individual goal.

What was the hardest part for you in earning this certification?
I went through most of the exam while living in the mountains of Virginia and working at a resort. The hardest part was getting wines to taste.

Do you have a first wine memory?
Having wines at home from the pioneers of California: the Wentes, the Martinis, the Kornells and the Mondavis.

Is there a dream bottle you'd love to open that you've never tasted?
I have been very blessed during my career by having had fabulous opportunities to taste great wines. I began my career in Washington, D.C., with lots of amazing tastings that aren't really seen anymore. I don't really have anything that would be classified as a dream bottle.

If you could only drink one more glass of wine, what would it be?
1983 Haut Brion Blanc.

Would you recommend any wines less than $10?
Of course, there are lots of really good wines from around the world that aren't expensive. No need to spend a lot of money for a daily glass of wine.

What are the next hot wine regions, whether newly discovered/developed, or rediscovered by a new, wider audience?
I am hoping the interest in regional wines continues. These wines are getting better with each vintage and I think supporting local is the way to go.

james TIDWELL

BEVERAGE MANAGER
FOUR SEASONS RESORT
DALLAS AT LOS COLINAS

Why did you pursue certification as a master sommelier?
After a business degree and culinary school, the master sommelier exam process added another aspect to my skills. The certification encourages learning wine, service skills, guest relations and peer-to-peer networking. All of these are focused on providing the best guest experience possible.

What was the hardest part for you in earning this certification?
Everyone has different aspects of the exam that provide more difficulty and growth opportunity. Trusting myself not only to obtain the experience necessary, but also to have the determination to continue the years-long process was difficult for me.

Do you have a first wine memory?
No particular first wine memory. I was reared in a household of teetotalers, so my exposure to wine began at university with something slightly sweet and fruity, probably white zinfandel. I have been fortunate to experience many ah-ha wine moments since then.

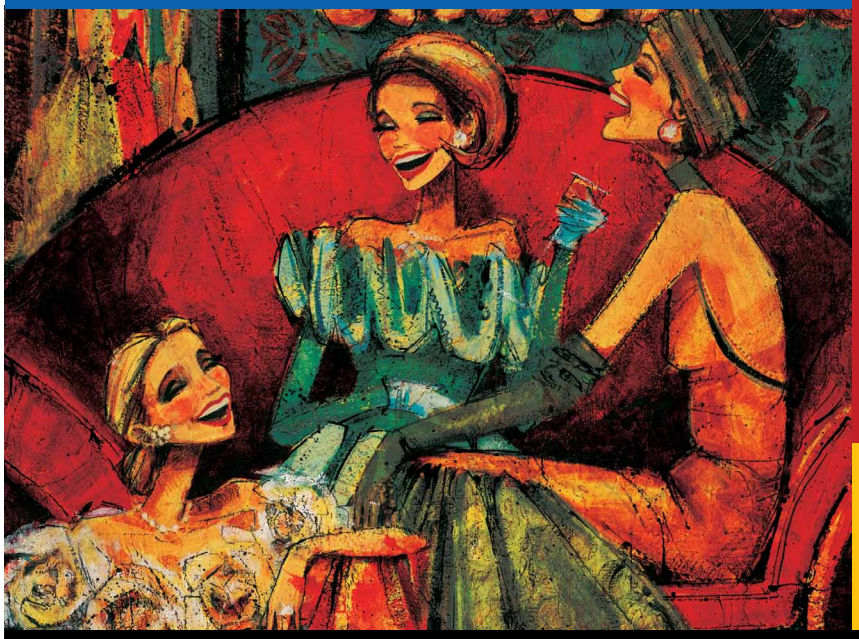
Is there a dream bottle you'd love to open that you've never tasted?
1945 Mouton Rothschild.

If you could only drink one more glass of wine, what would it be?
German Riesling, Piedmontese Nebbiolo or Burgundy of either color. The exact wine would depend upon who was with me, what we were doing, the mood of the participants, etc. Wine is about context, so I have difficulty with absolutes where wine is involved.

Would you recommend any wines less than $10?
Yes. And, I often do recommend inexpensive, but good value wines.

What are the next hot wine regions, whether newly discovered/developed, or rediscovered by a new, wider audience?
Greece, if Americans are not too afraid of the unfamiliar names. The quality and diversity of the wines are definitely on par with the great wines of the world, Portugal for good value and interesting wines.

For a long time, America was a nation of beer drinkers. Why are people loving wines more, drinking wines more and becoming more wine savvy?
Travel and the wealth of exposure provided by media have contributed to people wanting to experience other cultures. As the American food scene has evolved, so has our interest in wine and the beverages of other cultures.



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Story | **ROBIN BARR SUSSMAN**
Photography | **MARK LIPCZYNSKI**

Combining kitchen showmanship with a luxurious experience that is simply unparalleled, the chef's table is a private way to enjoy custom designed cuisine and personal attention direct from the chef. If you're looking for an indulgent culinary adventure featuring everything from garden-grown contemporary American tasting menus to eccentric Texas-Creole, pull up a chair at these kitchen tables and experience globe-spinning cuisine beyond your wildest foodie dreams.

QUATTRO
Chuck Kazmer

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Chef Danny Trace

Chefs Playground

Brennan's

It might be a special occasion that brings you to Brennan's, but don't assume that dining at the coveted chef's table will be a stuffy occasion.

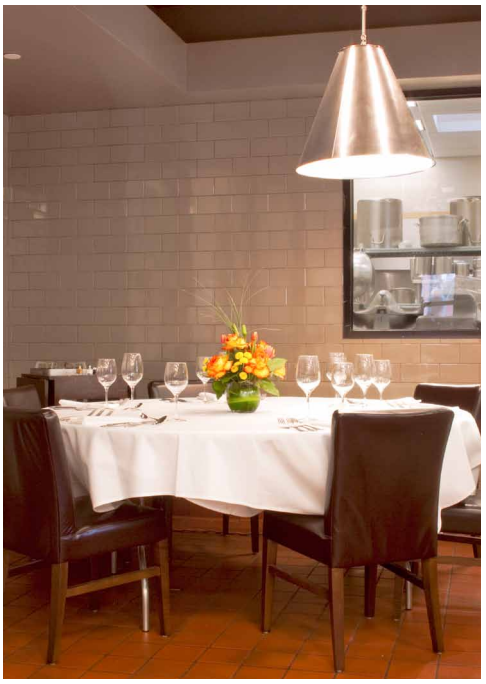
"It's a party," says executive chef Danny Trace, New Orleans native and recent transplant, who has been a top chef with the Brennan's restaurant family in New Orleans for years.

Reserve this intimate, round glassed-enclosed room that seats four to 10 people in the big bustling kitchen, and become an interactive part of the professional cooking, plating and serving action.

"Sure," says Trace with his relaxed attitude, "We let chef's table guests roam, ask questions and chop a few onions, whatever makes them happy. They are free to be in our element."

Chef Trace and sous chef Jose Arevalo personally deliver each delectable Texas-Creole course to their guests, fully describing each mouth-watering dish. As an option, resident wine guy John Ramos pairs an appropriate wine with each course and interacts with the evening's diners.

"We like to see our guests have a great time," says Trace, who consults with the host prior to arrival on menu requests, allergies, aversions and then custom-designs



Froberg's Farm strawberry shortcake

a menu based on the freshest ingredients in season and his creative whims. Repeat guests usually let the chef decide the menu from start to finish, with six to seven courses being the norm.

"Kitchen wizardry is a dominant gene in Trace's DNA," is how owner Alex-Brennan Martin describes the chef's talent. Recent spectacular dishes include an appetizer of barbecue crawfish on buttermilk biscuit shortcake with St. Arnold's beer aioli and entrees of grilled elk chop with corn jalapeno pudding. There's also the Alaskan halibut and blue crab with English pea and morel mushroom risotto in a chardonnay broth. Tart lemon meringue pie garnished with blueberry coulis and candied lemon zest is a heavenly ending to the show.

Seared sea scallops with leek fettuccini and salmon sauce

Le Mistral

Business partners and brothers David (the restaurant's executive chef) and Sylvain Denis, born and raised in Provence, have offered a chef's table since opening their first Le Mistral restaurant in 2001. Now that they have moved next door into a larger, modern space freshly painted in Provencal hues of sunflower yellow and warm terra cotta, the chef's table is located in a nook right outside the kitchen. Guests can see all the kitchen action, but the two-way windows do not allow the kitchen staff to see the guests.

"I'm very proud of my spacious new kitchen, but we wanted our guests to have semi-privacy so we took the table out of the kitchen where it is inevitably smoky, hot and loud," says Chef David.

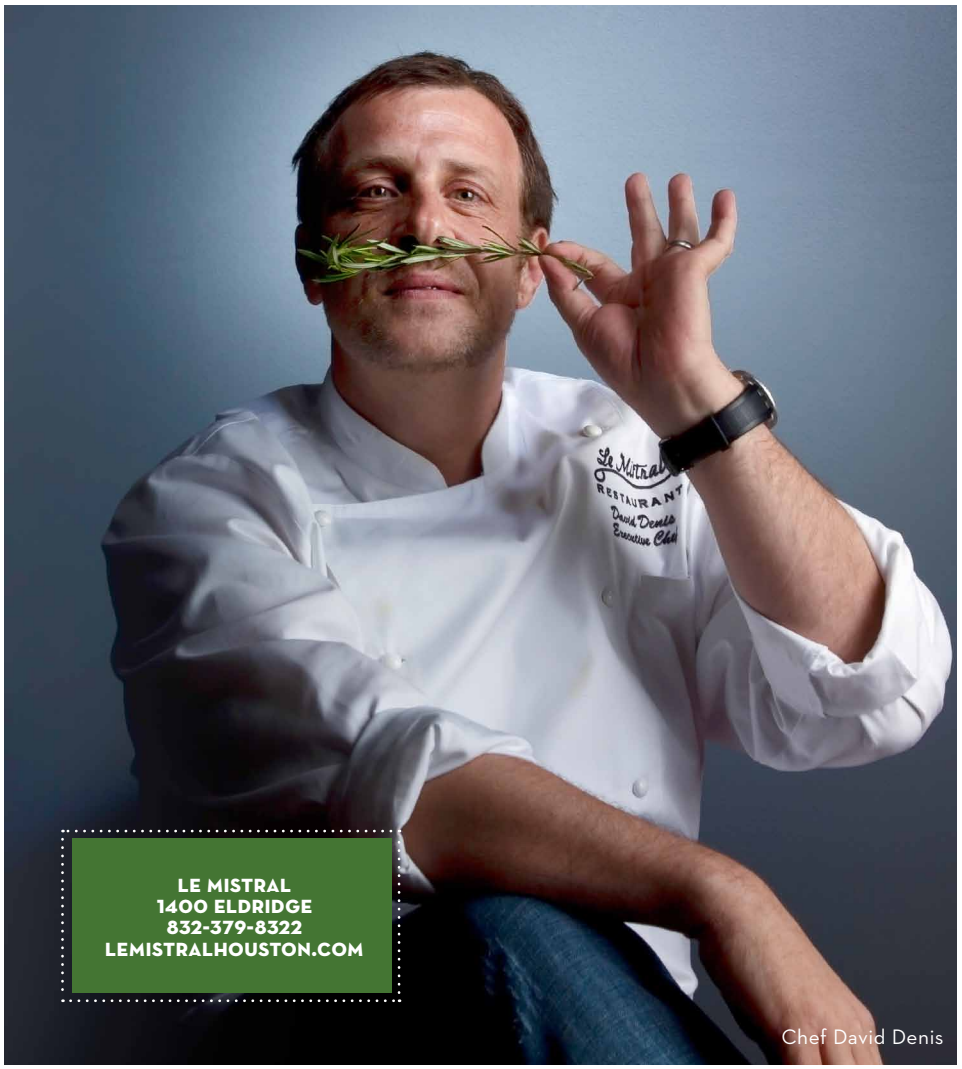
If the restaurant has a waiting list, you might get lucky and be offered to sit at the chef's table even without a reservation, ouí.

The intimate, contemporary room, which seats up to 10 guests and is booked every weekend, is softly lit and romantic with dramatic flowing orange curtains and soothing music.

"I call my chef's table my third child because I love it so much," says the charming chef, who speaks with a strong French accent. A certified master level chef by the Culinary Institute of America, he worked in prominent restaurants in France and Switzerland before moving to Houston to be an instructor at Alain & Marie LeNotre Culinary Institute.

His chef's table menus are similar to the rustic Provence-inspired cuisine on the restaurant menus except he likes to custom-design dishes based on his creative impulses and the guest's desires.

"I try to make each dish exclusive to the chef's table. Our goal is to spoil our guests," he says.



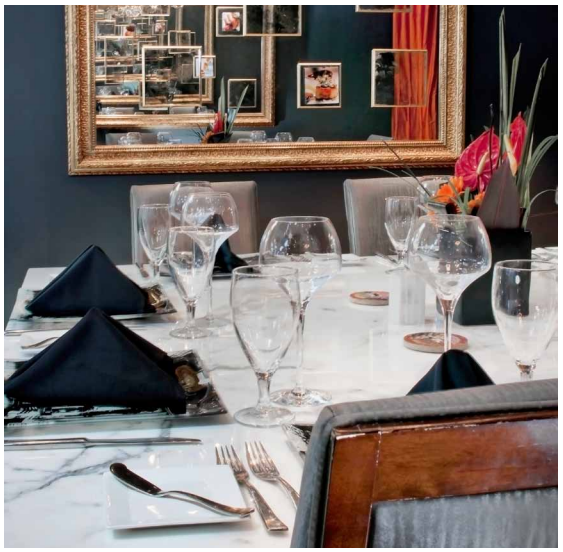
LE MISTRAL
1400 ELDRIDGE
832-379-8322
LEMISTRALHOUSTON.COM

Chef David Denis

The five French courses might include classic escargot de Bourgogne or soupe de champignons sauvages (wild mushroom soup with garlic whipped cream). Rack of Australian lamb, seared sea scallops with leek fettuccini, and Carbonara smoked salmon sauce and red snapper cooked en papillote are also popular, but the dishes are rarely ever the same.

If you opt for the wine pairing, sommelier Sylvain Denis will complement each course with the perfect pour from any region of the world. Note that Sylvain has assembled one of the most outstanding collections of French wines in Houston.

Carved roasted rack of lamb



House smoked salmon

Quattro

Crave a slice of Italy without leaving home? At the luxurious Four Seasons Hotel, La Cucina is the name of the chef's table in a small private room with a wall of windows looking into the gleaming state-of-the art Quattro restaurant kitchen. It's a softly lit, rustically chic room with chalkboards of menus hanging on golden hued walls and a heavy family-style wooden table that seats 20 guests.

Through the kitchen window, you'll see dozens of glowing copper pots and dangling skillets, but you will not hear them clanging as the door is closed off from the kitchen. Optionally, there are small chef tables in the kitchen for two to four guests to reserve.

Young, gifted executive sous chef Chuck Kazmer, who has been with the Four Seasons hotel group for over a decade, is in charge of the chef's table and he really gets in to it.

"The chef's table is fun for me and my cooks because we love to experiment with new ideas," says the German-born chef who appears between courses to explain the dishes served to his guests by the pampering staff.

The custom menu is contemporary Italian and consists of six to seven courses including wine pairings, if desired. Chef Kazmer uses fresh, locally grown produce including an enticing array of micro-herbs and lettuces, in addition to international items such as unique olive oils and condiments.

QUATTRO
FOUR SEASONS HOTEL
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FOURSEASONS.COM/HOUSTON

Chef Chuck Kazmer

THE RESTAURANT
INTERCONTINENTAL HOUSTON
2222 WEST LOOP SOUTH
713-627-7600
INTERCONTINENTAL.COM/
HOUSTON

Chef Peter Laufer

The presentations are modern and each small plate arrives on cool, abstract Italian ceramic ware. Chef Kazmer's pristine ingredients work together beautifully. Here's a taste of what you might experience: Rich house-smoked salmon with pureed avocado, red radish, orange sorbetto and mini arugula; speck-wrapped quail with blackberry-black pepper gastrique; or pappardelle pasta with lamb Bolognese, ricotta and mint. End things on a whimsical note with Shiner s'mores with vanilla marshmallow and Valrhona chocolate granite.

EDITORS NOTE: In June, Chef Kazmer became the executive sous chef at the Ritz-Carlton Chicago (A Four Seasons Hotel). Replacing him is Chef Maurizio Ferrarese, formerly of the Four Seasons Hotel Florence. A native Italian, Chef Maurizio will keep alive the tradition of fine Italian cuisine at Quattro, which will continue to host the chef's table experience.

Spring pea risotto with shaved asparagus

Maine lobster on Himalayan rock salt

Table One

When you book Table One chef's table in the Intercontinental Houston, prepare for a worldly culinary experience. This pretty chef's table decorated with exotic flowers that seats six guests is tucked away in the corner of the kitchen flanked with sheer billowy curtains. The semi-private dining setup allows guests to peek at the action, walk through the kitchen, or shut the curtains for privacy.

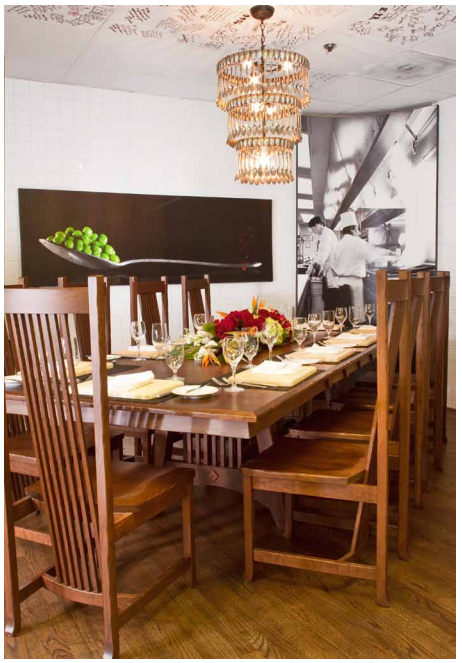
For a fun twist, each guest is given a removable ceiling tile and a pen so they can scribble down notes, signatures, thank you's, love letters and such throughout the evening. Then each tile is placed on the chef's table ceiling with all the other tiles displaying a who's-been-here collage.

Energetic veteran executive chef Peter Laufer from Munich has been at the helm of the hotel kitchen for more than five years, but the chef's table is fairly new. He built his repertoire by traveling the world cooking in fine hotels and restaurants in South America, Canada, Scandinavia and the Caribbean.

Expect an exciting menu based on these global forces—creative dishes not found in most American restaurants. The affable Laufer personally serves each diner at the chef's table and explains each course.

"We want to entertain the guests, so we play music to match the flow of the meal. It starts quietly and builds with each course," says Laufer who has a theatrical flair. The evening begins with a champagne reception, and then Laufer offers a tour of his tidy kitchen and explains the hotel services, to "make the evening an event."

The Market menu consists of six courses paired with wine. Or opt for three other types of menus including "The World," which is

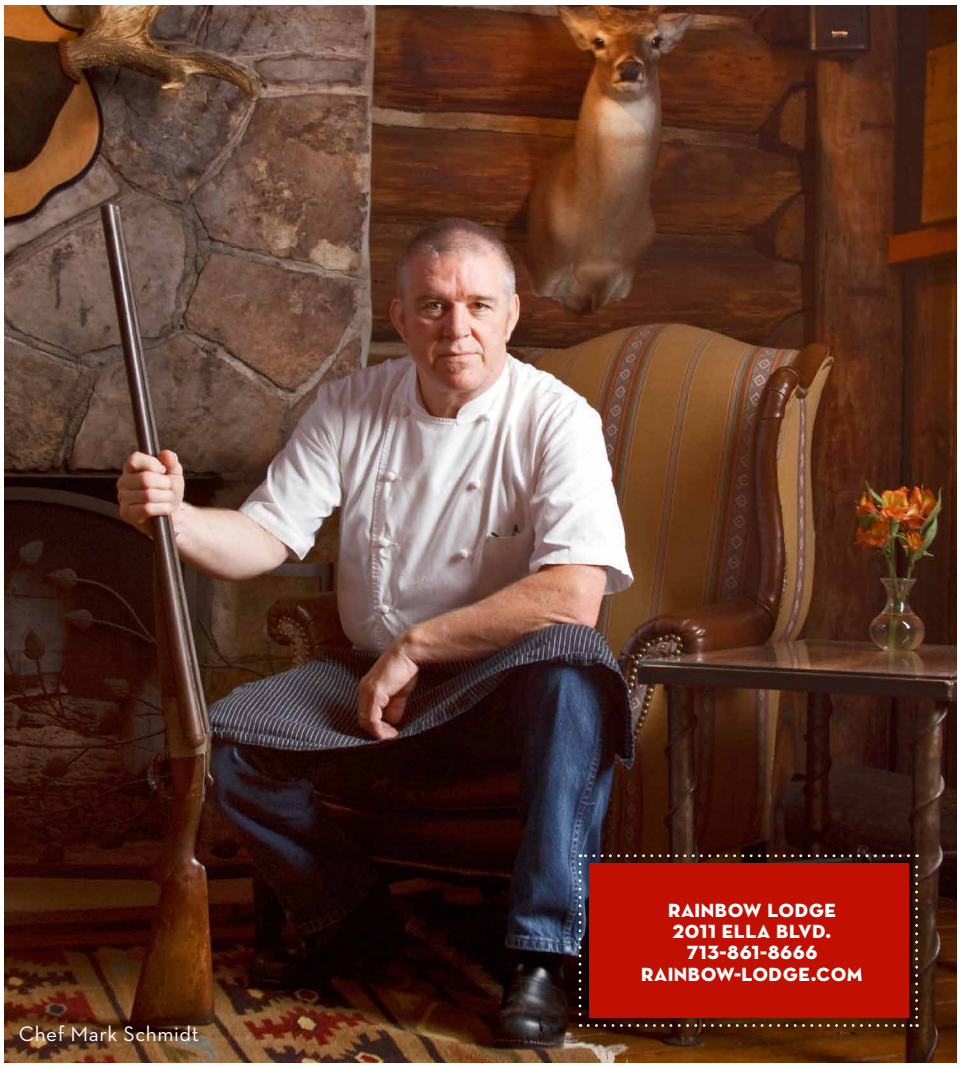


over-the-top courses with wine and a price tag to match (as in four digits per person).

"After interviewing the host regarding wants and needs, I design the menu around seasonal ingredients or specialties I can have shipped overnight, like fish from Hawaii," he says.

A recent spring time six-course menu included Kobe steak, whole Maine lobster presented on smoking Himalayan rock salt, Mediterranean sea bass filet with pea green salad, Duck Three Ways (seared foie gras over fresh raspberries, truffle oil-infused potato encrusted duck leg confit and roasted duck breast), and local Shiner Bock cheddar cheese with grilled peaches.

Don't miss his signature dessert, The Globe, a decadent, showy chocolate soufflé filled with fresh raspberries and oozing with warm chocolate sauce. Wicked!



Chef Mark Schmidt

RAINBOW LODGE
2011 ELLA BLVD.
713-861-8666
RAINBOW-LODGE.COM

Truffled egg salad

Rainbow Lodge

Over the rainbow and nestled in the sloping woods dotted with wild mint, fruit trees and wildflowers sits this venerable hunting lodge with a cornucopia of culinary surprises inside. One of which is new executive chef Mark Schmidt's seasonally changing food and wine Safari menu served at the "chef's table," a culinary foray of five to 14 courses.

The chef's table is not in the kitchen so the special menu is frequently enjoyed in the Orvis room, a handsome log-paved space with window views, a fireplace and tasteful hunting trophies. Here, you'll receive personal attention from the chef along with his individualized creations and talented sommelier Tim Neely's wine pairings.

Owner Donnette Hansen says Neely "defines gentleman hospitality." General manager/sommelier Neely has been with Hansen since her first location on the bayou near Memorial more than 23 years ago.

Schmidt has worked in top U.S. restaurants including The Compound in Santa Fe and in Dallas with celebrity chef Stephan Pyles. He most recently owned Café 909 near Austin before moving to Houston last fall and joining the Rainbow Lodge.

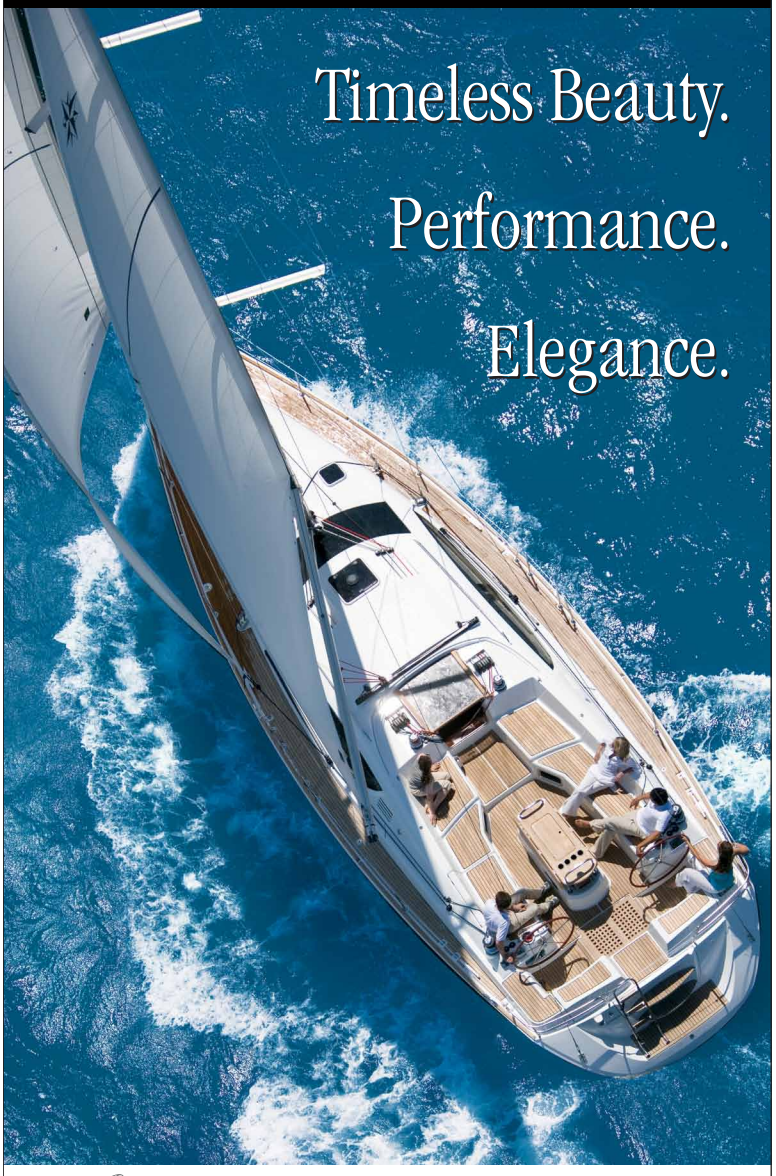
Venison carpaccio

The best available product is what drives his tasting menu and the on-premise garden with herbs; peppers and tomatoes are a highlight. Freshly harvested sugar snaps, red-veined sorrel, radishes, beets and haricot verts are intertwined in his immaculate dishes, which pop with color and layers of flavor. Tender baby romaine graces the venison carpaccio, a recent outstanding chef's table dish made even more fabulous with the warm, house-made ciabatta bread.

Chef Schmidt consults with the host prior to the dinner to check on allergies and preferences, but from then on, he calls the shots. Expect Lodge favorites including game and seafood with modern twists and artistic, cutting-edge presentations designed for epicureans.

Your five-course meal might unfold with an amuse of truffled farm egg salad with bright chive aioli and segue to seared diver scallops on sweet corn risotto dusted with pistachios. A small but mighty portion of seared duck breast with pickled ramps and fig couscous might be followed with tender antelope strip loin, crushed confit fingerling potatoes, wild mushrooms and minted hollandaise. Save room for the precious desserts such as lavender and cream two ways: petite honey and lavender crème brûlée and lavender and fresh raspberry mille feuille (an ethereal pastry). Guests take home printed, chef-signed menus at the conclusion of the meal as a keepsake.

Don't be left behind.



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Coffee sundae,
RDG + Bar Annie

connoisseur

THE **PRIME LIVING** GUIDE TO DISCERNING TASTE

inside:

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grande STYLE

Story | HOLLY BERETTO *Photography* | MARK LIPCZYNSKI

Chef Robert Del Grande needs no introduction to Houston diners who seek exceptional experiences. The brain behind the beloved Café Annie and the Grove in Discovery Green, Del Grade's name has become synonymous with haute Texas cuisine.

Diners who lament the closing of Café Annie should delight in the reborn RDG + Bar Annie, Del Grande's new spot combining the best of the past, with stunning looks to the future of Texas food.

Sample brunch for an exploration of styles and tastes. Make sure you try the traditional beignets, a little bit of New Orleans with a satisfying sweetness paired with a sassy raspberry sauce. Or order the half-dozen mini Sometimes Sunday doughnuts, dusted lightly with sugar and with none of that heavy fried feeling. The canned smoked oysters are so smoky, you can taste the wood, and the rich, red, slightly hot sauce they're bathing in brings new meaning to the word "incredible." Paired with toasted strips for dipping, this is the only eye-opener you'll ever need.

If you do, however, want another one, get the grapefruit margarita, a fresher, classier version of the tequila-laced happy hour staple. And do not miss Mimi's Rolled Tacos, scrambled eggs and black beans with avocado and chiles wrapped up in a soft tortilla. Comfort food? Haute cuisine? Who cares? It's just that good.

For dinner, begin with the Country Western Manhattan, a leathery, slightly cherry cocktail that just feels like sinking into your favorite club chair. This is a whiskey cocktail done right. Slide into the ahi tuna salad with frisee and roasted beets. The tuna is seared rare and the dish is a multi-layered exercise in texture and tone. The beets are wonderfully tart and firm, the ahi is slightly salty, its richness the perfect conductor for the beets' sassiness and the frisee's crunch. The truffle vinaigrette is an earthy cap to the appetizer.

The wood-grilled redfish with Texas oyster cornbread dressing is an explosion of Gulf sensations. The oysters are briny and juicy, the cornbread slightly sweet. The fish is firm and lightly battered, and the whole thing is an example of kicked up comfort food. The wood-roasted rabbit with rabbit enchiladas and red mole sauce is a holdover dish from Café Annie that Del Grande says became so popular, there was no way to let it go. It's delightfully gamey with a mild chile sauce, and the cheeses that surround the meat in the enchilada bring forth a stunning burst that's both earthy and immediately Tex-Mex.

Finish the whole shooting match with the coffee sundae, dressed up with fudge, powdered sugar and toffee chips. The ice cream is rich without being too much, and the coffee is a beautiful conduit for both the silky fudge and the crunchy toffee.

This Texas take on Continental cuisine is so much more than just great food. There's a sensation that what you're eating could only ever be found right here in the Lone Star State. And it could only be created by the incomparable hands of Robert Del Grande.

RDG + BAR ANNIE
1800 POST OAK BLVD.
713-840-1111
RDGBARANNIE.COM

REDFISH BAKED IN BANANA LEAVES WITH AVOCADO & QUESO FRESCO RELISH AND GARLIC LIME BUTTER

Avocado & Queso Fresco Relish
1 Haas avocado
2 oz. queso fresco
1/2 Serrano chile
1/4 white onion
1/4 cilantro leaves
1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. fresh lime juice
1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Garlic Lime Butter
4 garlic cloves, peeled
1 tsp. fresh lime juice
Pinch salt
Pinch black pepper
Pinch red chile flakes
4 tbsp. butter, cold

4 banana leaf sections, approx. 6-by-12 inches
1 white onion
2 garlic cloves
2 Serrano chiles
2 tbsp. butter
4 6-oz. fillets of Red Fish or Gulf Snapper
Salt and pepper for seasoning
Kitchen twine
Cilantro springs for garnish

Relish: Peel, seed and dice avocado into 1/2-inch pieces. Cut queso fresco into 1/4-inch cubes. Slice Serrano chile into thin rounds. Finely sliver white onion. In a small mixing bowl, combine all of the ingredients and gently toss or stir with a spoon to evenly mix. Press a piece of plastic wrap on the surface of the relish and refrigerate.

Garlic Lime Butter: Place the garlic cloves in a small pan and cover with water. Bring the water to a simmer and cook the garlic cloves until they are very soft. Pour off and discard the water. Lightly mash the garlic cloves. Add the remaining ingredients except for the butter. Reserve.

Lightly cure the banana leaf squares by passing each piece over an open flame or on a hot skillet until they become flexible. Lay the banana leaves on a work surface. Halve and thinly slice the onion. Thinly slice the garlic cloves. Seed and mince the Serrano chiles. Divide the sliced onion, garlic and minced chile between the leaves. Lightly salt and pepper the fillets of fish and lay them over the mixture. Divide the butter over the fillets. Fold up the banana leaves and tie with some kitchen twine.

Place the banana leaf packages in an oven-proof pan. Add a little water to the pan, just enough to cover the bottom. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 30 minutes. Open one package to test the fish. If it needs more cooking, close the package and roast for a few additional minutes.

When the fish is ready, add the butter to the pan with the garlic. Heat the pan until the butter melts and just begins to foam. Remove from the heat immediately.

Open the banana leaf packages and transfer to dinner plates. Spoon some of the avocado relish over each fillet. Spoon the garlic lime butter over the fillets. Garnish with cilantro sprigs and serve with refried black beans. Serves four.

Wood-roasted rabbit with rabbit enchiladas

Canned smoked oysters

Coffee sundae

Ahi beet salad

Blackberry cocktail, Stella Sola

THIS ISSUE'S SMALL BITES FEATURES **2010 JAMES BEARD AWARD NOMINEES**

GOOD EATS

Story | HOLLY BERETTO *Photography* | MARK LIPCZYNSKI

For a new take on the well-rounded meal, table-hop these Houston eateries for some of the best tastes in town.

FARM **FRESH**

Anyone craving fresh summer flavors need only come into Stella Sola, Bryan Caswell's new Heights hotspot, to slake their appetite. For here, Chef Justin Basye has created cuisine that marries the best of Texas tastes with Tuscan flair.

To wit the Farmhouse salad. This generous plating of Texas field greens with head cheese and crispy pig ears is perfectly refreshing and brilliantly hearty. The greens offer a crisp and peppery component that's matched against the richness of the head cheese. Basye and his team make this in-house and it's a burst of dense, layered tastes of salt and spices. The pig ears add a satisfying crunch that slides into a beautiful smokiness. Topping the affair is a snappy house-made mustard vinaigrette that brings together every layer of this ensemble like a conductor pulling forth the best round notes from an orchestra.

Basye says the salad is a perfect representation of its Tuscan roots, where home cooks and chefs alike trove markets daily to see what's available and what can be made from those ingredients. It's not only delicious, it's sustainable.

"We support local producers," says Basye. "And we love taking what they have and making great cuisine."

And remember this about Stella Sola: the Farmhouse salad is just the beginning.

STELLA SOLA
1001 STUDEWOOD
713-880-1001
STELLASOLAHOUSTON.COM

FOOD **FEAST**

Everything about Feast makes you feel like you've dropped into a rustic European inn, the kind you'd find tucked into the side of an old coach road, the kind you read about in historical novels. Rich woods, exposed beams, a charcuterie in an alcove upstairs next to a generous wine cellar.

And then there's the food.

Owners James Silk and Richard Knight have created an ever-changing menu bursting with "nose-to-tail" offerings, using every part of an animal to craft dishes that complement Feast's rustic charm. The one you want is the fish pie, a classic British comfort food. It's an utter explosion of creamy, leaky goodness, just oozing with English cheddar cheese and stuffed with huge pieces of white fish and scallops. The flavors tumble over each other: the scallops slightly sweet, the cheese slightly salty, the leeks and onions brightly earthy. The pie fairly begs to have bread sopped in it—and when you give in to that temptation, you'll love how the creaminess pairs with the homemade sourdough.

Silk and Knight don't skimp on the portions. The pie comes with a pile of crispy roasted Brussels sprouts, which pair perfectly with the richness of the entrée. The whole thing manages to be hale and hearty, without ever feeling heavy. Pair it with a Muscadet and you'll find the flinty minerality of the wine throws off a brightness that brings out the plump goodness of the fish.

Once you savor this feast, you know you'll be back.

FEAST
219 WESTHEIMER • 713-529-7788 • FEASTHOUSTON.COM

ALL **GROWN UP**

When I was a kid, a chewy, fudge-y brownie topped with vanilla ice cream seemed like the most wonderful, inspired dessert in the world. Imagine my delight at seeing the brownie a la mode on the menu at Textile.

And imagine just how rich and decadent such a dessert can be in the hands of pastry chef Plinio Sandalio, for whom this is no basic brownie topped with a slab of vanilla. It's a whole tour-de-force of flavor.

The brownie is quite small, but you won't care because it's so rich and chocolatey. Accompanied by candied and fresh strawberries, mint sheets, almond brittle and a Fernet-Branca ice cream, it's an exploration of how cool tones blend. The dense chocolate stands up beautifully against the clean mint and the sweet sassiness of the berries, but never overpowers them. The combination of the chocolate and mint is especially bright and beguiling. The almond brittle is loosely done and tastes like the most amazing toffee ever. The ice cream is infused with Italian liqueur so it is sweet, but comes with an herbal undertone that deliciously blends with the other flavors on the plate.

You might think a brownie with ice cream is a simple affair. Rest assured, after trying Sandalio's imaginative take on it, you'll never view it the same way again.

TEXTILE
611 W. 22ND
832-209-7177
TEXTILERESTAURANT.COM

BURGER **LOVE**

In the great state of Texas, the hamburger is undeniably hailed as the quintessential summer food. Fortunately, Houston isn't lacking in its offerings of the heavenly creation. In fact, several restaurants in and around the city are putting their own twist on this simple yet versatile dish that we all know and love. Here's a look:

- At Smashburger, home of the "better burger," guests are encouraged to build their masterpiece with an array of toppings including fried egg, guacamole and fried onions. With eight restaurants in the greater Houston area, you won't be far from burger nirvana. For locations, visit smashburger.com
- Just because the digs are swanky doesn't mean a smoking deal can't be had. On Tuesday nights, VOICE at the Hotel ICON (220 Main St.) is serving up the perfect early week repast—a gourmet burger, fries and an ice-cold draft beer for $10. Call 713-224-4266 for information.
- If the idea of a burger served in a sushi joint entices you, visit Sushi Raku (3201 Louisiana), where you can indulge in 100 percent Kobe beef sliders served with vegetable root "fries." This unique take on a classic meal is all yours for $6 during happy hour. For information, call 713-526-8885.

Kobe beef sliders, Sushi Raku

ESSENTIAL **ELEMENTS**

Celebrity chef Kent Rathbun has done it all. Four James Beard Award nominations. Check. "Iron Chef America." Check (and he won it, too). Owner of four popular Texas restaurants. Check. Now he can add creator of a specialty line of sauces and rubs for the at-home gourmet.

Kent Rathbun Elements is a collection of sauces, dressings, spices and marinades made exclusively by the Texas chef. Easy to use, these signature blends of flavors are said to transform any dish into a culinary masterpiece. Products include Spicy Thai Marinade, Texas Peach Barbecue Sauce and Rathbun's Family Barbecue Rub.

Products are available at Central Market locations throughout Texas; his restaurants Abacus, Jasper's, Rathbun's Blue Plate Kitchen and Zea WoodFire Grill in Plano; and his website, kentrathbun.com. Now, let's get cookin'!

STAR **SERVICE**

When they're not crushing the opposing team on the gridiron, Houston Texans tight end Owen Daniels and his fellow players are donning their waiters aprons and serving up juicy steaks at Morton's The Steakhouse.

On Aug. 30, Morton's is hosting Houston Texans Owen Daniels Celebrity Server Night, an event benefitting the Catch a Dream Foundation. The nonprofit organization grants once-in-a-lifetime hunting and fishing experiences to children with life-threatening illnesses.

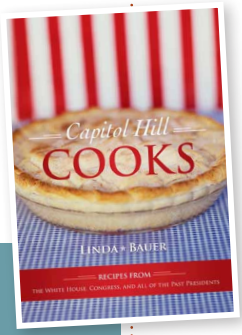
Enjoy a four-course dinner complete with wine, served from 6 to 10 p.m. The cost is $250 per person (inclusive of tax and gratuity). Morton's is located at 5000 Westheimer in the Centre at Post Oak. For information, call 713-629-1946 or visit mortons.com/primeevents.

SMALL **WONDERS**

If you're looking for tasty tapas, head out to The Woodlands, where a new tapas bar has opened at Market Street.

Featuring a variety of Spanish cuisine—including paellas, sangrias and, of course, tapas—1252 Tapas Bar brings together a wonderful mix of Spanish food and culture in a sophisticated setting. Guests can choose to sit at the bar or dine al fresco on the patio.

Named for the year King Alfonso X of Castile and Leon was crowned, the restaurant is open for lunch and dinner, Monday through Saturday at 9595 Six Pines, Market Street. Call 281-419-1260 for information.



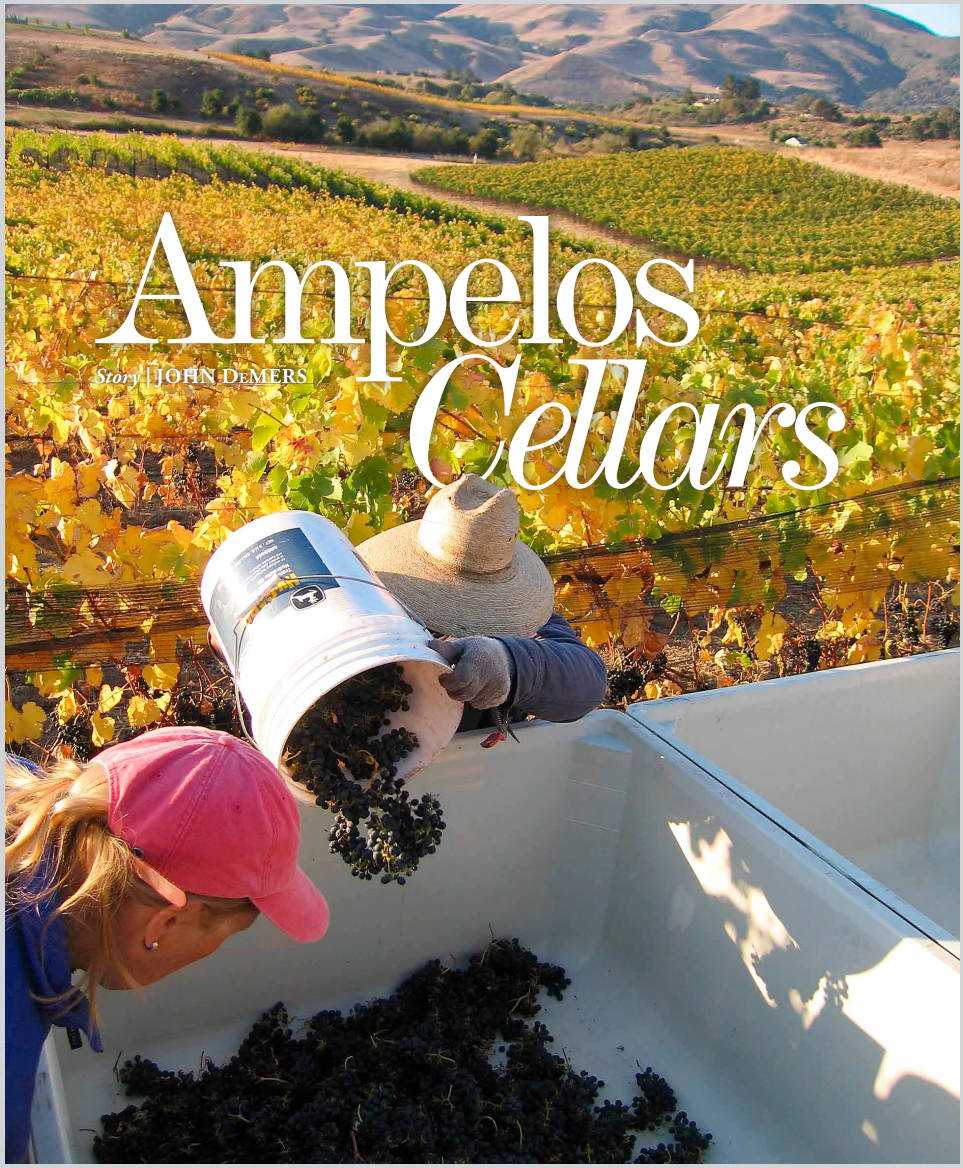
CAPITOL HILL **COOKS**

Ever wonder what Washington bigwigs like to eat in between meeting with constituents, passing legislation and enduring long filibusters? Politicos sure can work up an appetite.

For an inside look at what satisfies the culinary cravings of our nation's politicians past and present, Houston author Linda Bauer has written "Capitol Hill Cooks," a cookbook featuring recipes from the White House, Congress and our past presidents.

Compiled and written by Houston author Linda Bauer, the book contains hundreds of recipes ranging from George Washington's Cranberry Pudding to Barack Obama's Obama Family Linguini. Proceeds will benefit Homes for Our Troops.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SMASHBURGER | JILL HUNTER | ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHING GROUP | SCOTT HARBEN



Ampelos Cellars

Story | JOHN DEMERS

Like so many of us during Houston's long, hot summers, Peter Work wanted to live at the beach. In fact, he dreamed the impossible dream of owning a piece of beachfront property on which fine wine grapes would grow. His wife Rebecca, the daughter of a commercial fisherman and bush pilot in Alaska, always dreamed of corporate success, which pointed her toward America's biggest cities. "I needed concrete" is how she puts it, thinking back.

Yet as a couple, even before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 changed their lives forever, Peter and Rebecca had begun planting their new way of living. While corporate success in California remained their day job, they purchased 82 acres in Santa Barbara County in 1999. It had slowly dawned on Peter that a sandy beach wasn't exactly the place to make wine. And it had slowly dawned on Rebecca that jetting from coast to coast doing corporate things might not be everything she'd dreamed.

Then came 9/11.

The couple had flown together from California to Newark Airport that morning. Peter had a meeting, one that would have taken his subway car under the World Trade Center at approximately 8:45 a.m. At the last minute, the meeting was cancelled and Peter never boarded that train.

Truth is, there were a lot of things Peter and Rebecca never boarded again, all thought about and talked through during the long days it took them to make it home. They didn't even bother going to Los Angeles, but instead headed to their ranch amid the Santa Barbara vineyards that took shape as Ampelos Cellars.

This summer, whenever you're grilling red meat, I'd suggest the 2007 pinot noir that Ampelos has dubbed Fiddlestix, for its rich blend of cherries, strawberry pie and the barest hint of sweet tobacco. If you're eating more formal red-wine fare (meaning in air conditioning), you should try the 2006 Ampelos syrache (yes, a blend of syrah and grenache), a festival of bright fruits with balanced tannins and only enough oak to give support. And finally, Ampelos produces a refreshing rose from syrah—the perfect wine to chill real cold Texas-style and sip beside the swimming pool.

This winery with the Greek name (meaning simply "vine") has allowed Peter, Rebecca and their son Don to learn the wine business from the ground up. And along the same roads of life that carried Peter and Rebecca from corporate America to winemaking in the young Santa Rita Hills appellation, they took one small detour. They created a resort on Folegandros, the Greek island on which they were married. Peter got his beach. And Rebecca seems to be doing without her concrete just fine.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PETER WORK | GREG GORMAN | JOE MOZDZEN

JOHN DEMERS
Covering food and wine for more than 25 years, John DeMers hosts "Delicious Mischief" on NewsRadio 740 KTRH. He recently released *Follow the Smoke: 14,783 Miles of Great Texas Barbecue.*

On the BLOCK

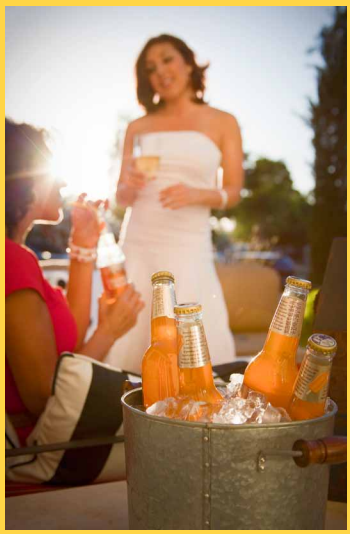
Story & Styling | JAIMEE ROSE
Photography | MARK LIPCZYNSKI

On the first Tuesday in August, your country wants you to come out from behind your garage door and get to know your neighbors. Aug. 3 is National Night Out—an effort to strengthen communities while having an old-fashioned good time. In honor of this national movement, we propose a block party, complete with sliders, sodas and an open-to-the-kids swimming pool or two.

The thinking goes something like this: If your street can pull it together for a night of treats and talking, then you can also help each other keep your neighborhood safe. We also believe that ice cream sandwiches promote universal bonding. Here's our guide to an easy night in the 'hood.

WARM WELCOME

The point of this party is to get everyone outside. Choose a central location on the street—maybe a front yard or two with willing hosts—and send out the word. Divide assignments: odd house numbers can bring salads or desserts. Even house numbers bring side dishes or drinks.



THIRST QUENCHERS

Ice down old-fashioned sodas for the kids and bottled beer for the adults. Tuck in a bottle of white wine, too. Straws remind everyone of being young and a kid again—riding bicycles in the streets.

THE DISH

Recruit neighbors to share in the cost of a main dish, like sliders. Grill your own or get them to go from such local faves as Little Bigs or Fuddruckers. And don't forget the fries—drive-through or take-out are great time-savers. Serve in mini takeout containers with individual cups of ketchup.

MAKE A SPLASH

Designate one or two pools as open to the public, and make sure you assign two adults per pool to keep watch. Activities will encourage conversation and lingering, so set up a bocce ball court, play croquet or choose a home with a basketball hoop for the bash's home base.

JUST CHILL

Play ice cream truck by filling an ice chest with ice cream sandwiches and Popsicles that will let everyone feel about 8 years old. We decorated ours with festive homemade flags.

PLATE IT UP

Stack the plates and napkins and let everyone have at it. If your party is small enough for it to be feasible, choose reusable dinnerware to promote community recycling. (And hire a teenager or three to wash up after.)

NIGHT LIGHTS

Lanterns make the street feel festive. Ask your neighbors to pull out their candle artillery or recruit the Christmas light masters (you know who they are) to line the street with homemade luminarias.

THE GOODS

STAR BAG
Made from recycled sails by Sea Bags. $110 at seabags.com.

TABLEWARE
Enamelware plates, $6.50 each; linen napkins and woven placemats, six for $54; boat serving bowl and galvanized ice bucket, $24; all available at Pottery Barn, 4022 Westheimer. 713-461-4057, potterybarn.com

TRAY
Red rectangular serving tray, $5.95 at Crate & Barrel, 4006 Westheimer. 713-490-6400, crateandbarrel.com

OUTDOOR DÉCOR
Outdoor pillows, $29 to $59; wood buoys, $19 to $29; lanterns $10 to $69; all available at Pottery Barn.

TAKEOUT BOXES
Striped takeout boxes, set of 12 for $6.48 at nashvillewraps.com.

SLIDERS
Fudds Sliders, three for $5 at Fuddruckers. For greater Houston locations, visit fuddruckers.com.

Learn more about National Night Out 2010 at nationalnightout.org.

IT'S SMART ON WHEELS.

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THE GENTLEMAN'S ROOM

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See You at the DRIVE-IN

Story | KARL HAUENSTEIN

If you grew up in America during the 1950s and '60s, you most likely have fond memories of nights at the drive-in. You may remember double-feature nights with the kids in the back seat in their pajamas, usually falling asleep after the opening feature cartoon. With the kids fast asleep, mom and dad would then enjoy the grown-up offering that was the second feature on the bill.

Or how about those raucous Saturday nights at the drive-in with your friends, when you tried to sneak a couple of them in for free by hiding them in the trunk of your car? Most of the action on those evenings consisted of socializing with friends at the snack bar.

And then there was the late-night feature movie, where you and a date steamed up the car windows and the action on the big screen was totally ignored in favor of the action in the car. Ah, drive-in movies. Who didn't love 'em?

This uniquely American phenomenon was invented by Richard Hollingshead of Camden, N.J., who mounted a Kodak projector on the roof of his car that projected onto a screen that was nailed between two trees in his front yard. The sound was provided by a radio placed behind the screen. Oddly enough, this invention proved

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1932, the feature film at drive-in theaters was the British comedy "Wife Beware," starring Adolph Menjou. The film was a little-known, second run-feature. People, however, did not object. Throughout the drive-in's history, its films were always incidental to the other forms of attractions it offered its patrons.

RANDY CARLISLE | ROBERT JACKSON | MIKE MIDDLETON

very popular and the first drive-in theater was patented and opened in Camden on May 16, 1933. In 1934, the country's third drive-in opened in Galveston and from there, Texas rapidly grew to become the drive-in movie leader in the United States, with nearly 400 theaters operating in the state during the late 1950s.

The same thing that made drive-in movies popular—the ability to enjoy a movie in private, to be able to talk and move around during the movie without disturbing other viewers—eventually contributed to their decline. The privacy afforded by viewing a movie from your car and the opportunities it offered for amorous activity by patrons led to drive-ins gaining a reputation as passion pits and caused families with young kids to stop going.

Additionally, at drive-ins, movies could only be shown once or twice daily after dark. They couldn't compete financially with indoor theaters where movies were shown continuously for 10 hours. After the drive-in boom years of the late 1950s and early '60s, the medium declined rapidly. Today, only 16 drive-in theaters remain in Texas, a huge drop from the 400 that operated here during the peak.

SHEREE ZIELKE | THERESA CAPPA

B-REEL

As drive-in movies began to acquire a reputation for being "sleazy passion pits," movie studios began to create a special genre of movies exploiting horror, action, gratuitous violence and nudity specifically to be shown at drive-in theaters: the B movie.

Interestingly, Texas embraced the genre in a big way and even had its own official drive-in movie reviewer and critic, John Bloom. Also known as Joe Bob Briggs, the critic had a weekly radio show in which he would give listeners the gory details on such things as how many gallons of blood were spilled, what exploded and which body parts rolled. He even did a breast count!

When the decline of drive-ins began, Joe Bob eventually had to find other gigs, mostly as an obscure actor in more mainstream movies. In fact, he played the incompetent slot machine manager who gets fired by Robert De Niro in "Casino." In Joe Bob's own words, "Check it out."

art & SCIENCE

Story | **DON ARMSTRONG**

It's been a decade since Cadillac first proclaimed its art and science design philosophy. In the past 10 years, GM's luxury brand has given us some cutting-edge beauties and a few that haven't quite hit the mark. Overall, however, it has propelled the wreath and crest to the top of the heap of American luxury automakers.

Since Cadillac's CTS Sedan has been its biggest seller, it would only make sense that the current coupe revolution would finally touch this popular mid-size moniker. Making its debut at the 2008 North American International Auto Show, the CTS Coupe was an instant hit with show goers, putting the wheels in motion for the General to put them in showrooms across the globe.

The CTS Coupe has the same wheelbase as the sedan, but an overall height that is 2 inches lower and length that is 2 inches shorter. Although the design draws from its sedan sibling, the coupe shares only the instrument panel, console, headlamps, front fenders and grille.

The windshield is laid at a 62.3-degree angle, while the back glass is raked nearly horizontal. To further distinguish the coupe from sedan, door handles have given way to a hidden touch pad with a hidden b-pillar. At the rear, a center-mounted dual exhaust system adds the exclamation mark.

The interior is a classic 2+2 layout, buckets fore and aft. Technology includes integrated iPod and MP3 capability, 40GB hard drive with the ability to store music, pause and replay live radio, pop-up navigation, adaptive forward lighting, Bluetooth, rear camera and a Bose 5.1 Surround audio system, just to name a few.

Standard power for the CTS Coupe will come from a 3.6-liter V-6 that delivers 304 HP to the rear wheels through a 6-speed manual or automatic transmission. Estimated fuel economy is 18 mpg-city and 27-highway with the automatic transmission, slightly less for the manual.

Expect the CTS-V Coupe, with a whopping 556-HP, to hit dealerships soon. Having driven the V Sedan, we can confirm that this is unlike any other Cadillac power plant that you have ever experienced. Officially put on notice are performance shops at Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

Ride quality leans more toward the European side of the Atlantic, unlike Cadillac's more traditional and softer riding DTS.

With a starting price of $40,000, the Cadillac CTS Coupe is sure to find its place among the hottest rods on the market today.

DON ARMSTRONG
Don's passion for all things automotive is no secret. His popular *What's Don Driving?* TV series garnered rave reviews and made him the new car go-to guy. He is also a member of the Texas Auto Writers Association.

QUICK FACTS

CADILLAC CTS SEDAN

MANUFACTURER
General Motors – Cadillac

DESIGNATION
CTS Coupe

SEATING CAPACITY
Four

BASE ENGINE
3.6-liter V-6

HORSEPOWER
304

TORQUE
273 ft-lbs.

MILEAGE
18 city, 27 highway

TRANSMISSION
6-speed automatic

CONFIGURATION
RWD or AWD

BRAKES
4-wheel disc

CURB WEIGHT
3909 lbs.

BASE MSRP
$40,000 (est).

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SONY READER

Story | MICHAEL GARFIELD

Summer has arrived with its long, lazy days and vacations by the pool or on the beach. A good book is usually a constant companion on such occasions, but those bound paper pages are becoming a bit old school. E-readers are now the rage and they couldn't make it much easier to catch up on your favorite authors or current magazines on the latest electronic gadgets.

Sony was the first company to release a thin, light device that allows books to be downloaded and read anywhere. It now has three versions on the market under the Reader brand name. They range in price from $200 to $350. The high-end Reader Daily Edition is perfect for downloading periodicals such as *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. These periodicals, books and other content are delivered wirelessly to the device via a built-in 3G card.

Realizing it had the world's largest online bookstore at its disposal, Amazon got in the e-reader game a few years ago with its now popular Kindle. There are two current models on sale, including the Kindle DX. With a depth of only 1/3 of an inch, the DX has a large 10.4-inch screen, which makes it easier to read than smaller screens. Content can also be downloaded wirelessly and it holds up to 3,500 books.

The e-reader game escalated this spring when Apple released its iPad. While this device performs many other functions, it offers a beautiful 9.7-inch diagonal LED screen. Yes, this one is color, unlike the Amazon and Sony devices, and allows for easy indoor reading. I find the glare bothersome when reading in direct sunlight on the iPad, but downloading books could not be easier as Apple's iTunes interface is used just like when buying music and movies. At 1.5 pounds, it is considerably heavier than the dedicated e-readers and the price is a hefty $500 on the low-end.

One of my favorite devices is from Barnes & Noble. The retail giant released the Nook early this year and offers more than one million e-books, newspapers and magazines. This $259 color device has a built-in 3G card for downloading content anywhere and Wi-Fi capability with special features offered when accessed from a Barnes & Noble store. It has two screens: the main window for reading and a narrow one at the bottom for quickly browsing through a book.

Battery life is always a consideration when shopping for the best device. Each manufacturer claims around 10 hours of reading time when the wireless features are turned off. Most of the dedicated downloadable services offer many of the same books and magazines but each offers a few niche titles and products, which may better suit your reading interests.

MICHAEL GARFIELD
Known as "The High-Tech Texan®" to audiences nationwide, Michael hosts technology and issue-oriented talk radio shows six days a week on The 9-5-0. See what he's up to at HighTechTexan.com.

APPLE | BARNES & NOBLE | SONY | AMAZON

straight SHOT

Story | DOUG PIKE

In May, outdoor enthusiasts found a new way to spell fun: ECP. That's the bag-tag designation of the first commercial airport to open since the 9/11 attacks on our nation, and it welcomes passengers daily now to the Florida panhandle.

Officially named Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport, the facility is served directly from Houston by Southwest Airlines. That's especially good news for travelers who like to tote their own toys, because golf clubs, fishing tackle and even the shovels and buckets from which great sand castles are made all fly free on Southwest.

I was in the region this past March at WaterColor Inn, which is run by a former Houstonian. From that base of operations, I played two premier golf courses and interviewed the world's best-ever woman golfer, Annika Sorenstam, who was in town for a charity event. There wasn't time for fishing on this particular trip, but will be on the next.

What's particularly appealing about this region is it satisfies so many appetites. There are family-style accommodations and restaurants, places where kids can be kids and so can adults. And there are boutique hotels such as WaterColor, at which you can virtually drown yourself in luxury and indulgence.

By morning, evening or whenever the fancy strikes, you can drop your shoes and walk for miles, east or west, on soft, white sand. In this usually quiet corner of the Gulf of Mexico, water most often laps green and clear and gently onto the beach. The colors complement each other and soothe like sugar and aloe.

Inshore or offshore, fishing here is on par with anywhere. Bays and tidal lakes produce quality trout and redfish, the beachfront runs seasonally with pompano and other delicious species, and the usual suspects encountered by nearshore anglers include king mackerel, cobia, jack crevalle and bull reds. Offshore anglers, on the right day, might draw strikes from tuna, wahoo or even blue marlin.

Golfers have a dozen options and not a cull in the bunch. Courses vary in challenge and charge, but are all worth a few hours under the Florida sun. Among my favorites is Camp Creek, a Tom Fazio design that demands careful shot placement with every swing. Once private, Camp Creek now welcomes daily-fee players to its immaculately maintained course.

Scoring was better at Shark's Tooth, which on the whole is a little wider and shorter than Camp Creek. No surprise, Shark's Tooth is a Greg Norman design and one of which he can be proud. Although private, this course is available to resort guests at WaterColor and WaterSound.

Make note that The Origins at WaterSound are slightly unusual. It's a Davis Love III concept that encourages family participation through its unique configuration. Its six traditional holes can be played as a nine-hole executive course or 10-hole par-3 course. Players of all ages and abilities are welcome.

Southwest and ECP didn't break new ground with the opening of this airport and new route—northwest Florida has been a favorite destination of Texans for decades. Only now, it's just a quick non-stop away.

DOUG PIKE
Doug has traveled the world to satisfy his passion for the outdoors. During his career, he has won 100-plus state and national awards for writing, broadcast and photography.

TEE TIME

Check these three golf courses during your stay in northwest Florida.

CAMP CREEK

A Tom Fazio design that has a bit of a devilish feel. It is loaded with temptations, but mistakes at those junctures can result in big numbers. Check your ego at the door and listen to your caddy. *campcreekgolfclub.com.*

SHARK'S TOOTH

The work of Greg Norman, the first fairway here is as wide as a sizeable Texas cattle ranch. If you miss it, return immediately to the club house and give up the game. If you hit that fairway, you'll continue through 17 more enjoyable and memorable holes. *sharkstoothgolfclub.com.*

THE ORIGINS

From the mind of Davis Love III comes this hybrid layout that can be played any number of ways and welcomes families regardless of their golfing abilities. *originsgolfclub.com.*

ST. JOE COMPANY

EXOTIC THAILAND

From Bangkok to Phuket Island, this southeast Asian country is a rich mix of tradition, mystery and beauty

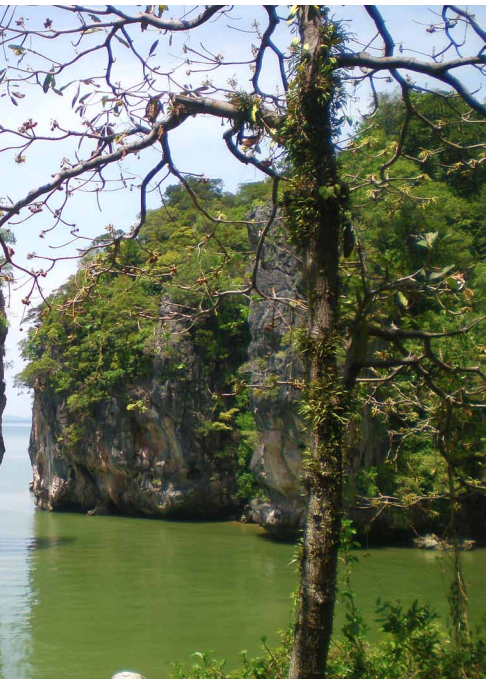
Story & Photography | DAVE O. DODGE

Literally half a world away, Thailand is a place like no other. With its ancient culture, majestic temples and lush tropical scenery, it is a place you will never forget.

Surviving the long-haul flight is the first hurdle, but once you arrive at the ultra modern and futuristic airport in Bangkok, you'll immediately wonder what awaits you in a land that inspired such classics as "The King and I" and films like the "Man with the Golden Gun." One of the largest countries in Southeast Asia, it is a melting pot of old world traditions and modern mayhem with Bangkok front and center. There truly is something for everyone in Thailand.

Made up of more than six million people and dating back to 1769, Bangkok is Thailand's largest and most diverse city. It has been referred to as the Venice of the east with its miles of canals along the Chao Phraya River. These waterways play a major role in everyday life in Bangkok and are an easy way to see the city. There is also a brand new metro, as well as a futuristic sky train that will transport you to your destination above the crowds and congestion on the streets below.

Thailand's religion is Buddhism and Bangkok is the center for many religious pilgrimages. Most



men serve some time as a monk to honor their family and provide some economic relief. Most Buddhist temples are called wats and are decorated with such detail and color, they become alive with personality.

With so many to see, start at the Grand Palace at the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, Thailand's most treasured and iconic temples. Be sure to remove your shoes at all sites, or someone will kindly remind you to do so. Also, pace yourself, or the beauty of the wats will all start to blend together.

Not to be missed is the Golden Mount, as well as climbing the steps of Wat Arun, known as the "Temple of Dawn," to see the city from another view.

After Buddhism, shopping is the next religion. With countless shopping malls, street markets and vendor stalls, you can find just about anything in Bangkok. For designer clothes and ultra chic shopping, go to the Emporium or the MBK Center, both just off the sky train line. You might also try King Power, where, on a slow day, you might be the only shopper in a mall that is all designer labels and completely duty free.

It's not for the faint of heart, but grabbing a tuk-tuk, a sort of souped-up golf cart, and letting the driver take you to a real market will be memorable. Markets are portable and negotiable, so get ready to explore and haggle. From antiques to knock-offs, market shopping is perfect after a day of sightseeing. Don't miss the Patong Night Market right next to the go-go bars and steamy nightlife that Bangkok is famous for. After finding your Gucci wallet, drop into a bar in this notorious district for a drink. The beer is local, the air conditioning is cold and the music is loud.

Thai silk, with its huge range of colors and textures, may be the most widely recognized product from Thailand. The ultimate in luxury during your stay is to have your inner designer come out to create a custom made garment that can be sewn in 24 hours and delivered to your hotel. Choose from hundreds of tailor shops.

Thailand also offers a wide variety of handmade crafts from its many regions. To the north there's Chiang Mai with its hill tribe's traditional crafts, while to the south is Phucket Island where tourists rule.

Although it's only a 50-minute plane ride away, Chiang Mai is a world apart from Bangkok. This walled city located in the north dates back to 1296 and its residents are referred to as "northern folk." With a mountainous terrain and close proximity to the Mekong River, this city played a vital role for the Lanna monarchy, which was dissolved in the early 20th century.

Visit this region for a traditional Thai massage, culture-rich cuisine and a ride on a Thai

GETTING THERE

Non-stop flights to Bangkok are available from on Thai Airways, departing from Los Angeles International Airport. For information, visit thaiairways.com.

WHERE TO STAY

Mandarin Oriental Hotel
Bangkok and Chiang Mai
mandarinoriental.com

Prince Palace Hotel
Bangkok
princepalace.co.th

Kata Beach Resort & Spa
Phuket Island
katagroup.com/katabeach

GETTING AROUND

Domestic Flights are available on Air Asia. Visit airasia.com for information on itineraries and schedules.

FROM THE EDITOR

As of this printing, civil unrest and protests in Bangkok and other Thailand locations have been on the rise. The U.S. State Department strongly encourages U.S. citizens in Thailand to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok or through the State Department's travel registration website.

For information on general crime and security issues, U.S. citizens may also consult the Department of State's Country Specific Information for Thailand and the Worldwide Caution, located at the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website.

U.S. citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 888-407-4747 from the United States and Canada, or 202-501-4444 from overseas.

HELPFUL LINKS

U.S. State Department Travel Registration
https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui

Bureau of Consular Affairs
http://travel.state.gov

U.S. Embassy in Thailand
http://bangkok.usembassy.gov

U.S. Embassy Travel Alerts in Thailand
http://bangkok.usembassy.gov/042810travelalert_thailand.html

elephant, considered a true rite of passage. In addition, there are countless day trips available from the city. One of the most popular is to the Golden Triangle, a region along the Mekong River that borders Laos, Burma and Thailand. There is no shortage of luxury hotels here, including the luxe Mandarin Oriental, which is very close to the market.

Just a two-hour flight south will take you to Phuket Island. The largest of the islands, Phuket offers pristine beaches and even a rain forest. There are also day trips to the Phi-Phi Islands for out of this world snorkeling or an exhilarating speed boat ride to "Bond Island."

After having toured this exotic land, you will come away with a sense of having visited the other side of the world.

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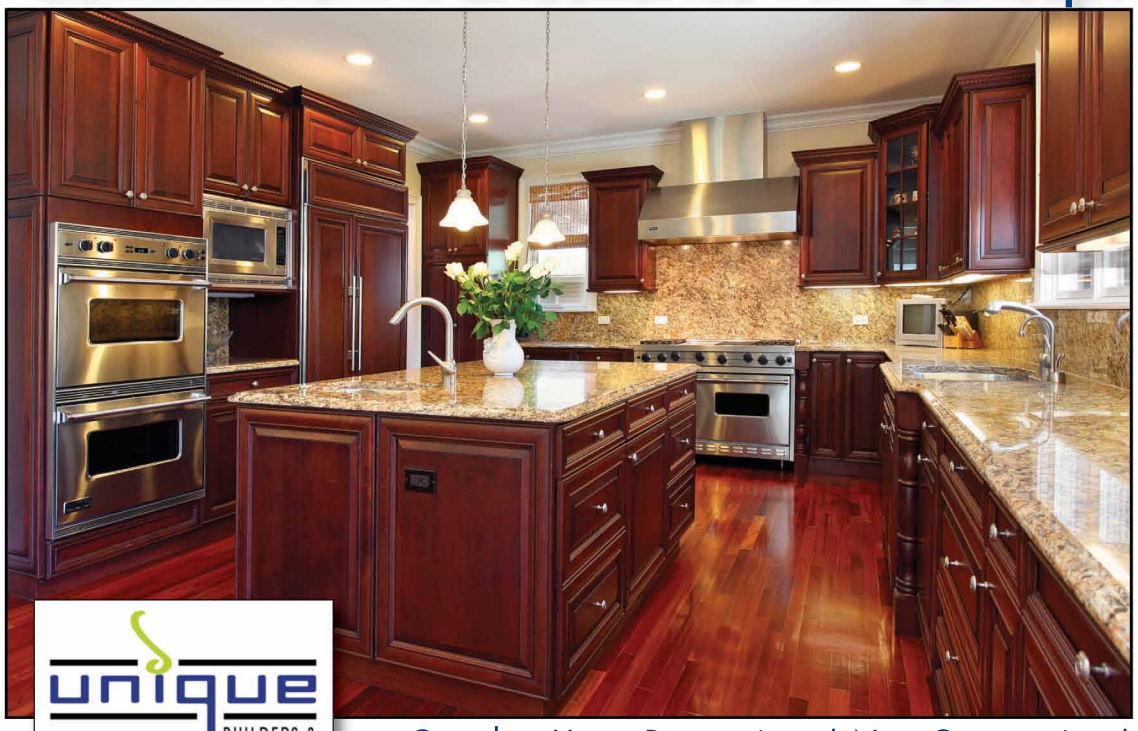

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ISLAND PARADISE

If the thought of having your own private island getaway has you practically packed up and ready to leave at a moment's notice, then this little gem might be just for you. Located on the white sand beaches on Barnes and Meads Bays, the Viceroy Anguilla is a 134-residence development that recently completed construction and is now offering stunning beachfront and blufftop villas for sale.

Internationally-known interior designer Kelly Wearstler designed the residences, which combine aquatic landscapes with sculptural and organic elements such as driftwood, rattan and travertine.

On-property amenities include a variety of dining experiences, personal chef and butler service, an 8,000-square-foot oceanfront spa, championship tennis courts and a youth program.

Residences start at $935,000. Call 800-357-1930 for information or visit viceroyanguillaresidences.com.

NEW HEIGHTS

California-based airline Virgin America recently unveiled a new in-flight menu featuring food and wine pairings by world-renowned wine expert Gary Vaynerchuk.

The new menu will roll out over the course of the year and selections will vary by route. Pairing recommendations include:

- Fruit and Cheese Plate – Selection of artisan cheese—brie, aged cheddar, red Leicester, sage derby, pepper jack and smoked gouda cheese—garnished with lambs lettuce, black figs, raspberries and blackberries. Paired with Arrowood 2002 Sonoma County Merlot.
- Tropical Fruit Appetizer (breakfast) – Fresh pineapple, pepino melon, mango, watermelon, papaya, kiwi and strawberry tossed with a tangy lemon verbena syrup and fresh lemon zest. Paired with Turnbull Sauvignon Blanc 2008.
- Poached Pear with Hazelnut Crisp Cake – Poached Williams pear stuffed with candied orange mascarpone, served with hazelnut crisp cake, creme Anglaise and chopped hazelnuts. Paired with Turnbull Sauvignon Blanc 2008.

Virgin America has also expanded its onboard menu for summer and will debut Vaynerchuk's Wine Library TV on the in-flight entertainment system.

The airline flies to San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C., among other destinations, and is adding flights to Toronto and Orlando this summer. For information, visit virginamerica.com or call 877-359-8474.

DESTINATION ALASKA

Holland America recently announced 31 itineraries to Alaska, from Glacier Bay and Denali National Park to the Kenai Peninsula and Yukon, starting in 2011.

Ranging from 10 to 20 days, cruises combine Inside Passage sailing with land tours designed to showcase Alaska's wilderness, wildlife, native culture and history. Many tours also include Canada's Yukon Territory with its Klondike Gold Rush heritage and pristine national parks.

There are a number of packages to choose from, including the Yukon & Denali CruiseTour, which travels between Vancouver and Skagway with stops at Denali National Park and other destinations, and the Denali CruiseTour, on which guests can enjoy glacier viewing at Yakutat Bay or Glacier Bay National Park.

Packages start at $999 per person. Visit hollandamerica.com or call 877-932-4259 for information.

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Recipe from TLC

Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

1 Large portobello mushroom
whole-leaf fresh spinach, rinsed
handful shredded mozzarella
1 tsp Italian seasoning
1/4-1/2 roma tomato, diced
1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary

Remove stem/stub if still attached | Rinse and dry the mushroom, | Sprinkle half of Italian seasoning inside mushroom cap | Lay 4-5 spinach leaves inside cap, staying inside the edge | Add mozzarella cheese, covering all or most of the spinach | Sprinkle remaining Italian seasoning and 1 tsp rosemary over cheese | Grill 12-15 min on medium heat or on top rack of high heat grill, until all cheese is melted | Remove and add diced tomatoes | Serve immediately, while still warm. Makes one serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

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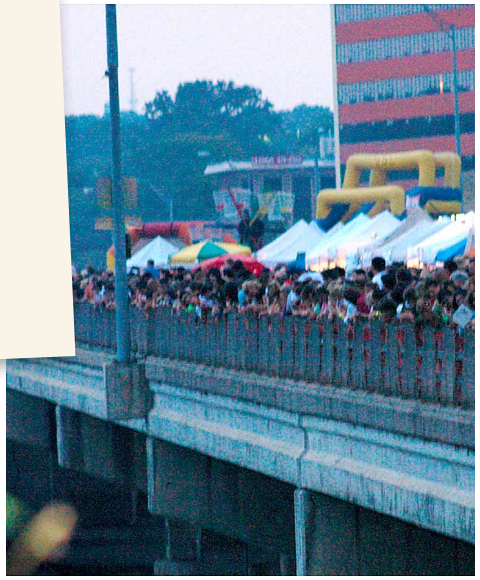
post CARDS

Dear Prime Living,
If a luxury getaway isn't quite what you're looking for in the coming months and you'd rather stay closer to home, then head to Austin for the city's annual Bat Fest. On Aug. 21, the heart of downtown, home of the famous Ann Richards Congress Avenue Bridge, comes alive with Austin's largest arts and crafts show. Join 40,000 of your closest friends and enjoy music and live entertainment while shopping for everything from jewelry and fine arts to stained glass and photography at nearly 150 art booths.

When you can shop no more, sit back and watch nature's show as more than 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats pour out from under the Congress Avenue Bridge in a cloud, lifting off in search of a delicious dining-out experience.

-Samantha



austin

With a city as diverse as Austin, there's pretty much something for everyone. Austin has countless hotels, but if the bats are going to be the main attraction, the Radisson Hotel and Suites-Town Lake (111 Cesar Chavez at Congress) is the perfect place for you. The bats can be viewed right from your window.

If a resort and spa is more your speed and golf is your game, make a reservation at the fine Barton Creek Resort and Spa (8212 Barton Club Drive). Enjoy a few hours at the spa and grab a cocktail at Barton Lounge before heading over to The Oasis (6550 Comanche Trail) for dinner. Said to be the largest outdoor restaurant in Texas, The Oasis is just 20 minutes from downtown Austin. With views overlooking Lake Travis, it is *the* place to watch glorious Texas sunsets.

If you have a shop-til-you-drop mentality, bring extra luggage and visit Austin's one-of-a-kind emporiums. Kick Pleat (918 W. 12th) is a great boutique with something for everyone, including emerging labels from Hache to Apiece Apart. Or try Uncommon Objects (1512 S. Congress Ave.), where owner Steve Wiman collects top-notch goods for his one-of-a-kind shop.

After experiencing all that downtown has to offer (which could easily take more than a couple of days) head over to the Stone House Winery (24350 Haynie Flat Road), situated on a high bluff overlooking Lake Travis. Lunch, wine, great atmosphere and a spectacular view seem like a great way to end your trip to Austin. And if you didn't see and do everything you wanted, no worries. They'll be waiting for us next time.

GOING BATTY

If you want to make your bat watching experience a little more memorable, Austin offers a few great ways to elevate your viewing experience:

CAPITAL CRUISES
Home to what might be the largest electric paddle wheel boat in the country, Capital Cruises offers a sunset excursion that gives you a front-row seat to one of the most spectacular wildlife spectacles in the world. With tours available March through October, customize your excursion with dinner, cocktails and entertainment. capitalcruises.com

SEGCITY SEGWAY
Enjoy insightful commentary from a local guide as you spin around town and view Austin's greatest landmarks. The tour ends with a great view of the Congress Bridge, where you'll get a great view of the bats evening departure. segcity.com

LIVE LOVE PADDLE
Starting at Joe's Crab Shack on Lady Bird Lake, groups kayak up the lake to a great vantage point of the bridge where they'll see the bats emerge. The two-hour sunset tour gives visitors a unique perspective of this famous Austin attraction. livelovepaddle.com

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ANGELA MOENCH | RAYFORD PRICE | ROADWAY PRODUCTIONS | SARAH KERVER

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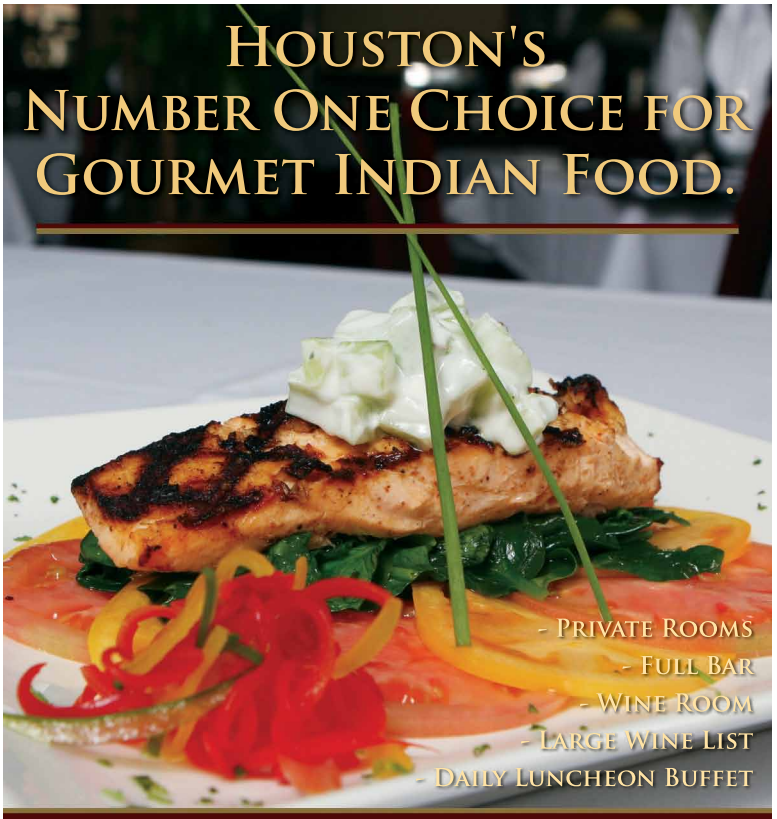

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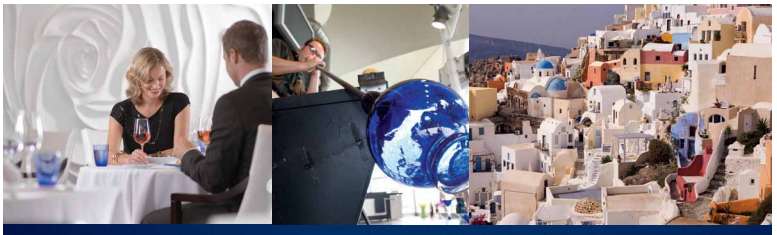

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Peaceful, tree-lined walkways and the calming waters of Reflection Lake welcome visitors, while bronze and granite monuments will stand in quiet repose alongside the magnificent Texas Liberty Mausoleum and Robert L. Waltrip Memorial Chapel. Once constructed, the mausoleum will comprise of 8,000 square feet, with premier entombments available for selection. Robert L. Waltrip Memorial Chapel will serve as a quiet escape for personal meditation.

Those looking for a truly unique experience will find it in Lakeside Estates, where families have the opportunity to build their own private estate overlooking peaceful Reflection Lake. Regardless of your choice – cremation or traditional burial – Reflection Lake Estates offers a number of memorialization options, including custom monuments and estates.

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Disclaimer: Mausoleum not available until construction is complete. Anticipated date of availability: December 2010.

What's on Your Plate?

Story | SALLY J. CLASEN

Food nourishes and gives us energy but how important is eating for the long haul? Experts constantly study the ability of certain foods to slow and reduce the signs of aging and age-related diseases. Dee Sandquist, a registered dietician and spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, recommends the "plate method" as part of any healthy aging nutrition plan. The plate method is filling it half full of fruits and veggies, a quarter whole grains and a quarter proteins. Here is some additional boomer food for thought on eating for longevity.

THE GOOD FATS

Continue to fill up on the usual good-fat fare—avocadoes, walnuts, salmon, canola and olive oils—unsaturated fats with anti-inflammatory and preservation properties that protect the heart and skin. Also make room for a serving of chia seeds (the same seeds that make your Chia Pet grow hair). Chia is a relative of the mint called salvia hispanica and is hailed for its power-packed nutritional advantages. The seed contains protein, fiber, magnesium, calcium and, most of all, ALA, a type of omega-3 fatty acid. In fact, it has more omega 3s than any other plant source, including flaxseed.

A 2007 study published in "Diabetes Care" also showed chia seeds provide promising cardiovascular benefits for those with Type 2 diabetes. After consuming four teaspoons of chia seeds every day for three months, participants reduced blood-clotting factors by 20 percent and markers for inflammation by 30 percent. They increased levels of essential omega-3 fatty acids by 80 percent and dropped six units in systolic blood pressure.

THE HEAT FACTOR

A little spiciness and flavor in the diet may do a boomer good for a variety of reasons. Herbs and spices contain diverse antioxidants that help optimize health and decrease the risk of chronic disease. They also are a great alternative to salt. Some, like ginger, which has 12 antioxidant compounds, are widely used to counter the effects of digestive tract mechanisms that weaken with age.

"As we get older, many people have challenges with digestion. Ginger can calm the stomach and help with digestive health," Sandquist explains.

Turmeric, which is a root powder that gives curry its yellow color, indicates promise in lab studies for fighting infections and some cancers, reducing inflammation and treating digestive problems, such as inflammatory bowel disease. The active ingredient in turmeric is curcumin, a polyphenol, a kind of chemical that may protect against some common health problems and possibly certain effects of aging. Polyphenols act as antioxidants. They protect cells and body chemicals against damage caused by free radicals, reactive atoms that contribute to tissue damage in the body.

The U.S. National Institutes of Health currently have nine clinical trials registered to study the use of dietary turmeric and curcumin for a variety of disorders, including Alzheimer's disease, cancer and arthritis.

It also might be worth it for boomers to get hot and bothered once in awhile. A recent study completed at the UCLA Center for Human Nutrition suggests hot peppers raise body temperature and, through a series of

bodily reactions, help shed pounds. The heat factor is the chemical compound capsinoids found in jalapeno, habanera and Serrano chilies that trigger an adrenaline rush, and then increase the heart rate, which in turns burns calories in small ways.

BRILLIANT PICKS

Berries are health capsules loaded with vitamin C, calcium, magnesium, folate and potassium. Their link to longevity appears to be in their brilliant black, blue and red hues, which stores powerful plant-based antioxidants. Over time, these antioxidants fight free radicals and cell damage that compromise the immune system. Specifically, black raspberries have a mix of cancer-preventing and cancer-fighting antioxidants that alter hundreds of genes in cancer cells, as reported in an Ohio State University research study published in "Cancer Research" in 2001.

Another effective anti-cancer fruit is blueberries, which contain an antioxidant compound called pterostilbene. It has been shown to prevent colon cancer in a study presented at the 233rd national meeting of the American Chemical Society. In addition, blueberries and raspberries contain lutein, which is important for healthy vision.

Researchers at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies have discovered that fisetin, a naturally occurring flavonoid found in strawberries and other fruits and vegetables, stimulates signaling pathways that enhance long-term memory.

In the past few years, one particular fleshy fruit, the acai berry, has risen to super-food status for its antioxidant and antibacterial powers. The exotic berry is harvested from Brazilian palm trees and contains essential amino acids, the building blocks of protein synthesis. Among the potentially preternatural (outside or beyond the natural) claims that boomers find attractive, it enhances skin, improves energy and controls weight, yet no scientific research exists to confirm the aging advantages. Still, Sandquist reminds us, "There's still no one magic food or pill, it's the 'total' diet."

Got Vitamins?

You're probably not worried about getting bigger and stronger as a boomer, but you still need to make sure you get adequate daily vitamins and minerals. As you age, your body becomes less efficient at absorbing nutrients, which means you need to consume more to achieve the same results. Here is some basic vitamin information, including the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) for adults 51 to 70:

Vitamin B

Includes eight water-soluble vitamins, including B6 and B12, which play important roles in several body systems: nerves, metabolism, cells, skin and muscles. According to the American Dietetic Association, absorption decreases with age, especially B12. Experts recommend boosting your B intake with more whole grains, leafy greens and flax, and based on individual diet and absorption, it's important to get vitamins from a food source first and then maybe a supplement if a deficit exists.

Best food sources: B6 is found in a variety of foods, including fortified cereals, beans, meat, poultry, fish, and some fruits and vegetables. Vitamin B12 is naturally found in animal products, including fish, meat, poultry, eggs, milk and milk products. It is readily available in fortified breakfast cereals, but not generally in plant foods.

DRI: B6, 1.7 mg for men, 1.5 mg for women; B12, 2.4 mcg

Vitamin D

Promotes calcium absorption, helps boost immune system and reduces inflammation. According to the American Dietetic Association, the daily intake for vitamin D may increase, so check with the updated "Dietary Guidelines for Americans," published by the Department of Human and Health Services and Department of Agriculture. It's due for revisions sometime this year.

Best food sources: Very few foods in nature contain vitamin D. The flesh of fish (such as salmon, tuna and mackerel) and fish liver oils are among the best sources. Small amounts of vitamin D are found in beef liver, cheese and egg yolks. The best source is from fortified foods, such as milk, breakfast cereals, orange juice, yogurt and margarine.

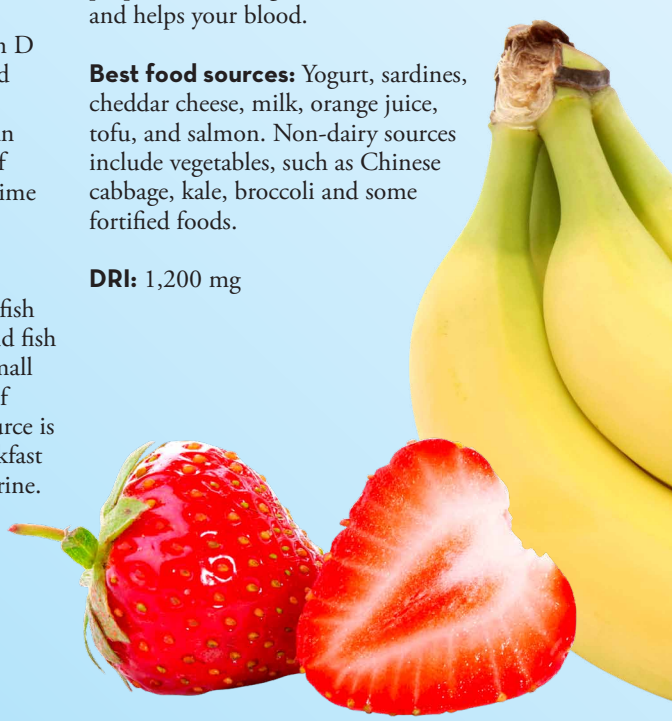
DRI: 10cg/400 IU

Calcium

Promotes bone and tooth strength, ensures proper functioning of muscles and nerves, and helps your blood.

Best food sources: Yogurt, sardines, cheddar cheese, milk, orange juice, tofu, and salmon. Non-dairy sources include vegetables, such as Chinese cabbage, kale, broccoli and some fortified foods.

DRI: 1,200 mg



THE folate FACTOR

It's associated as a supplement that pregnant women take to protect against neural tube defects, but boomers need their folate (or folic acid, the synthetic form), too. The recommended amount for adults is 400 micrograms daily.

Folate is a common B vitamin found in whole grains and green leafy vegetables. It plays a role in the synthesis, repair and function of DNA, our genetic map, and also helps prevent changes to DNA that may lead to cancer. Adults and children need folate to make normal red blood cells and prevent anemia. It's also essential for the metabolism of homocysteine, an amino acid.

A study at the University of Wageningen in The Netherlands showed that high-dose folic acid supplements taken over a long period slows the effects of aging on the brain. And in a study published in the "British Medical Journal" in 2006, researchers produced scientific evidence that suggested folic acid lowers homocysteine levels and is a simple way to reduce cardiac disease and strokes. However, a new Canadian study published in the "Journal of the American Medical Association" cautions that diabetics who consume high doses of B vitamins may increase their risk for heart attacks and strokes.

Folate-rich foods include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, asparagus, dried beans, peas, chickpeas and brown rice, as well as fortified breakfast cereals, bread, oranges and bananas.

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Prime Living Women's Health Symposium

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SUGAR LAND • 5.1.10

More than 200 baby boomer women started their morning off with mimosas and media celebrity Mary Jo Rapini at the 2010 *Prime Living* Women's Health Symposium presented by Memorial Hermann. Attendees had the opportunity to shop vendor booths and attend classes on such topics as "How To Get Your Mojo Back," "Revving Up Your Metabolism" and "Yoga for Health." Guests received lots of goodies, including the Laura Bush FEED bag from Whole Foods, Sugar Land.

Photography | **PAMELA CONTRERAS & SHELLY CHETTY**

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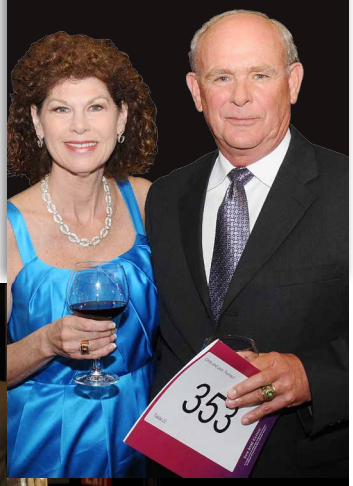
1 Jamie Middleton, Joy Dowell 2 Mary Jo Rapini 3 Maria Bassa 4 Nancy Wood, Joann Eck, Adele Booth 5 Pat Altman, Julie Altman

Art With Heart Gala

INTERCONTINENTAL HOUSTON HOTEL • 5.15.10

This event was all heart as the proceeds raised through this year's Art With Heart Gala more than doubled previous year's figures! Gala chairs Gina and Devinder Bhatia elevated the style of the popular event to that of an elegant gala. Emcee Bob Boudreaux noted that San Jose Clinic shines as an exemplary charity provider of medical care for Houston's uninsured. A hot item up for grabs at the live auction was an original painting "Equestrian Montage, No. 1" by featured artist John Ross Palmer. San Jose Clinic honored Dr. Carolyn Farb and The Charity Guild of Catholic Women as its 2010 Portrait of Compassion honorees.

Photographer **| ROBERT ALLRED PHOTOGRAPHY**



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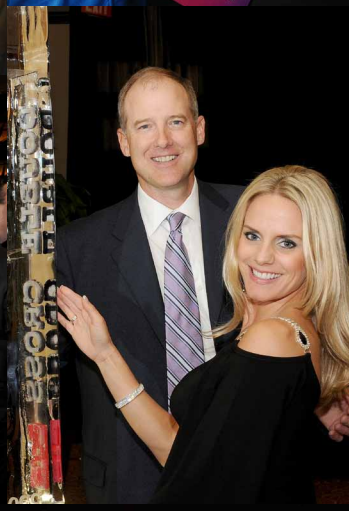

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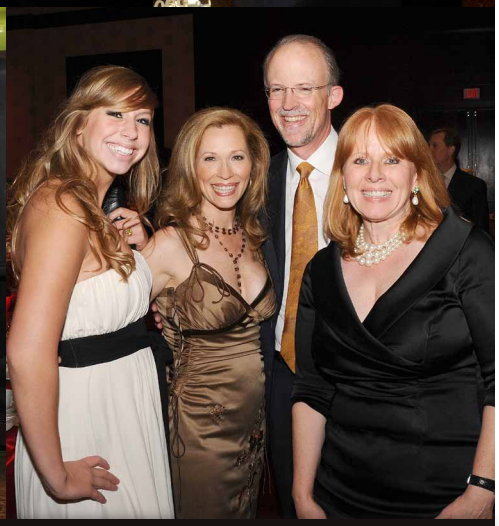

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the PRIME list

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Mad Hatter Fashion Show and Luncheon

NORRIS CONFERENCE CENTER • 4.14.10

The Red Oak Ballroom was quite a display for the Third Annual Mad Hatter Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show presented by *Prime Living* and benefiting Fort Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels. More than 300 guests were treated to a fashion show featuring local personalities, including Sugar Land Councilwoman Jacquie Chaumette, Doug and Susie Goff, and Channel 2 weatherman Khambrel Marshall, who were all decked out in fashions and stylings by JoAnn's, Jos. A. Bank, Pinkie & Black and Salon Eben & Day Spa. Local designers and businesses dressed the tables with elaborate centerpieces and themed décor to compete for the "best dressed table" award, which were voted on by attendees. With Roseanne Rogers as emcee and Linda Lorelle as the keynote speaker, this was the must-attend event of the season!

Photography | **ROSWITHA VOGLER**

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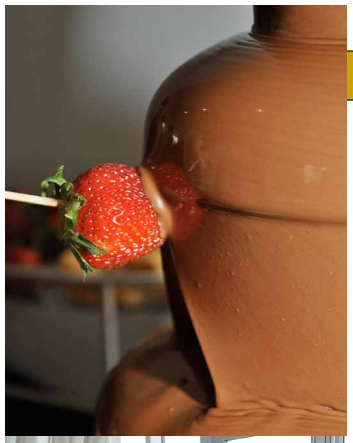
GET ON THE *LIST* AT PRIMELIST@PRIME-LIVING.COM

1 Linda Lorelle and Riyad Abu-Taha 2 Jacquie Chaumette 3 Karyn Dean, Roseann Rogers, Jana Phillips, Tina Cohen 4 David, Claudia, Victoria and Sophia Vasquez 5 Geraldine Whitt, Teresa Cox Reading, Mary Hall, Nicole Volek 6 Sue Jordan and friends 7 Khambrel Marshall 8 Roseann Rogers 9 Tracy Bonds, Jeni Scarborough, Angie Prejean, Kelli Wheat, Aimee Montgomery, Tiffany Sczech



Mad Hatter Tea Party

HOTEL SORELLA • 5.12.10

A warm-up to the Third Annual Mad Hatter Luncheon and Fashion Show, this was not your typical Disney tea party. Held at the luxurious Hotel Sorella, the fancy fete featured themed tea cocktails provided by Maker's Mark and Tea Forte, and a delicious dessert station by Chocolate Fountain Expressions. Benefitting Meals on Wheels, the event was a colorful precursor to the luncheon and fashion show, where guests let loose with a variety of fun and whimsical hats and fashions.

Photography | ROSWITHA VOGLER

the PRIME list

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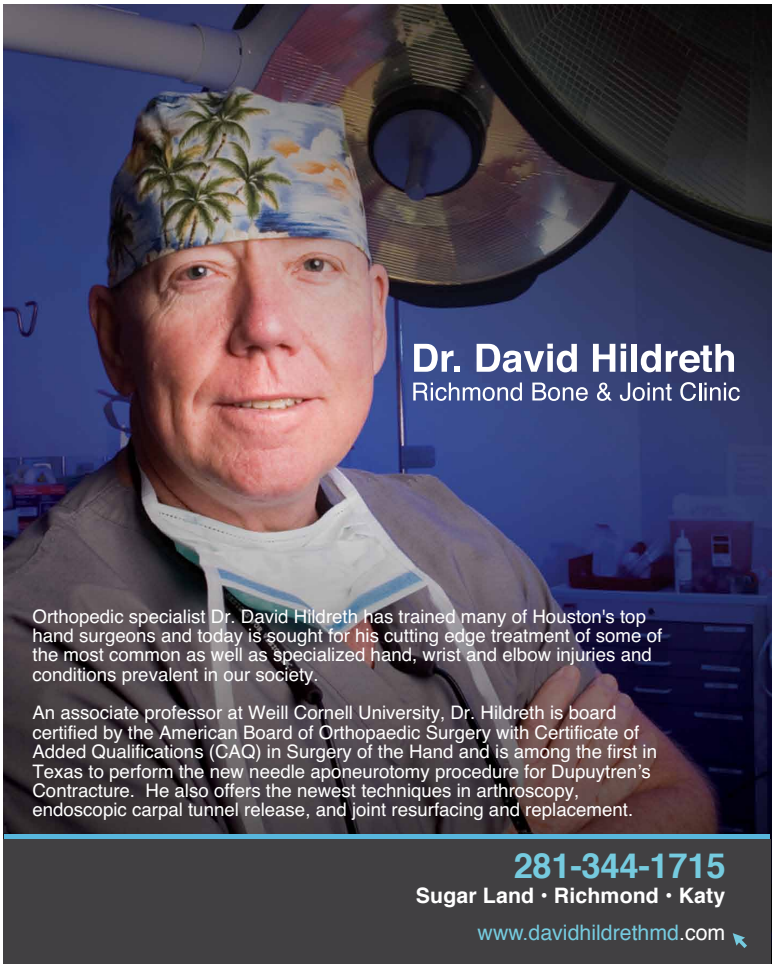
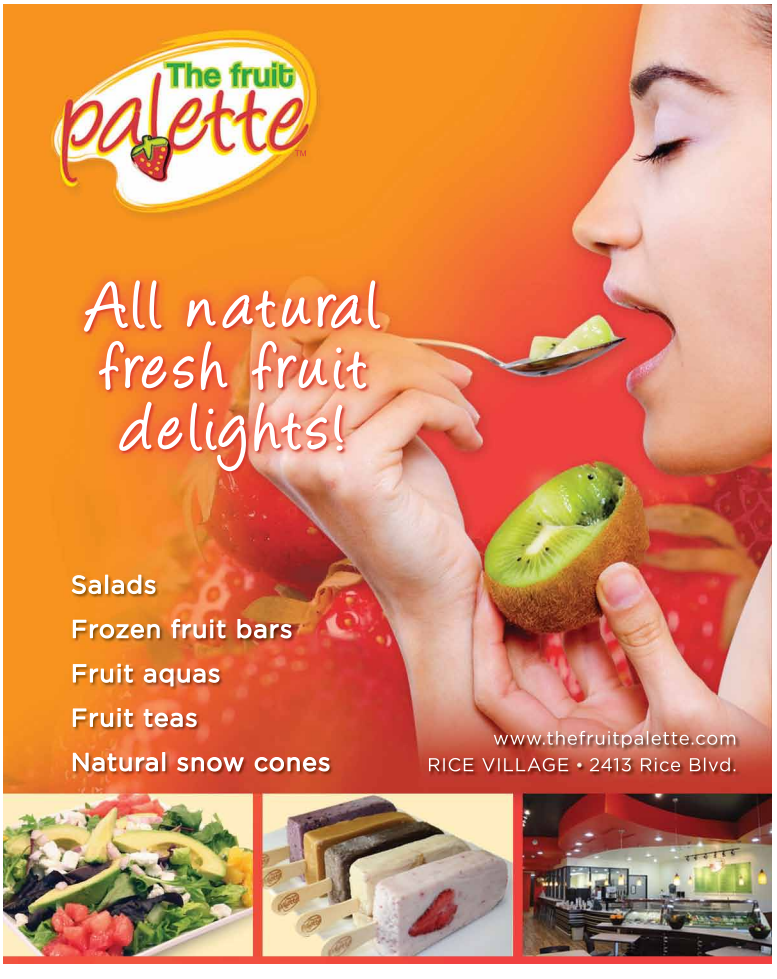
1 Charles and Kristin Weiss, Manuela and George Arroyos 2 Susie Goff, Jacquie Chaumette 3 Hailey Harris, Kim Pataky





the PRIME list

An Unbridled Affair

HOUSTON DESIGN CENTER • 5.1.10

In May, guests saddled up for An Unbridled Affair at the Houston Design Center's Kentucky Derby Party. Attendees enjoyed VIP treatment in the "*Prime Living* Jockey Club," where they watched and placed bids on the Kentucky Derby races, sipped premium bourbon drinks and nibbled on derby bites. Local TV celebrity Ernie Manouse judged the "Most Derby Chic Couple" and "Best Derby Hat" contests. Proceeds from the event benefited scholarships for design students in local area colleges.

Photography | **ROSWITHA VOGLER**

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Annual Cigar Night

PETROLEUM CLUB OF HOUSTON • 4.30.10

The Petroleum Club of Houston's Annual Cigar Night provided an unforgettable soiree for the discerning gentleman. The evening featured gourmet hors d'oeuvres and exclusive cigars, including the Kristoff and Vengeance brands provided by Cigar Cigar. Raffle proceeds benefited SIRE, Houston's Therapeutic Equestrian Centers. The invitation-only event was held for Petroleum Club members, *Prime Living* readers and those on Prime's VIP list.

Photography | **ROSWITHA VOGLER**

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1 Becky Dunn 2 Jayne Edison, Bobby Davenport, Lee-Ann Sawyer Johnson 3 Paula Harvard, Wendy Miles 4 Ernie Manouse, Sheri Roane 5 Suzy Bergner, Janine Iannarelli
6 Jim and Amy Hardy 7 David Bahlo, David Nettles, Amy Johnson, David Salamone 8 Jason Dluhy, Courtney Claiborne 9 Ed Ayres, Glen Case 10 Jesse Marion

ASK P&L the expert

your questions **answered**

PLASTIC SURGERY

John LoMonaco, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Board-Certified Plastic Surgeon

Q. *Should I go for Smart Lipo or Traditional Liposuction?*

A. Smart Lipo might have some small advantages. The best way to ensure a good result from any type of liposuction is to choose a Board Certified plastic surgeon, experienced in the various liposuction techniques. SmartLipo which uses a laser to melt fat may have some advantages over traditional liposuction. Bruising, swelling and downtime may be less after SmartLipo, and there may be a skin tightening effect in certain patients.

John LoMomaco, M.D., F.A.C.S.
1009 Missouri Street | Houston 77006
713.526.5550
www.DrLoMonaco.com

AUTOMOTIVE

Maria Moncada-Alaoui
General Manager
Porsche of West Houston

Q. *We all know about Porsche's reputation as a performance automobile,, But is that their main focus?*

A. It has never been about a big engine with blind horsepower. Porsche's guiding principle has always been efficient power. We have engineered efficiency into many parts of the Porsche. From the Direct Fuel Injection (DFI) system to the double-clutch gearbox (PDK) we have been able to produce a 500 horsepower Turbo that returns a logic-defying 23 mpg! Not to mention 27 mpg highway from 385 Horsepower 911!

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www.porschewesthouston.com
www.audiwesthouston.com

ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

Dr. David Hildreth
Richmond Bone & Joint Clinic

Q. *How do I know if I'm suffering from Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?*

A. CTS is a repetitive strain condition resulting from a repetitive motion – and sometimes hormonal changes in women. The median nerve located in a narrow passage (carpal tunnel) inside the wrist becomes compressed with growing pressure, causing mild numbness and tingling on the palmar surface of a finger and possibly severe pain radiating up towards the shoulder.

Dr. David Hildreth
15035 SW Freeway | Sugar Land 77478
281.344.1715
www.davidhildrethmd.com

YACHTS

Gerry Laster, CPYB
VP/GM, Texas Coast Yachts, LLC
Yacht Dealer for Jeanneau

Q. *How do I find the right boat and the best deal in a new or used yacht?*

A. Find a Certified Professional Yacht Broker (CPYB) or Authorized Yacht Dealer that makes you comfortable talking about what YOU want in a boat. That includes helping you define what you plan to do with a boat, where you plan to sail or use your boat, what kind of experience YOU want, and what kind of budget you have for a boat. The best deal is not just about price, it is the best value for your needs.

Gerry Laster, CPYB | Texas Coast Yachts, LLC
1500 Marina Bay Drive, Ste 122A
Clear Lake Shores 77565
832.385.8469 | www.texascoastyachts.com

COSMETIC DENTISTRY

Guy M. Lewis, DDS, FADFE
Texas Center for Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry

Q. *What exactly are G. Lewis Veneers?*

A. They are contact lens-thin porcelain veneers that are placed over the front of your teeth. Unlike traditional porcelain veneers, little to no tooth preparation is required, which preserves the natural tooth structure. I couldn't find any commercially available veneers that I would put on my family or my patients, so I created my own.

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4800 W. Panther Creek Dr | Suite 200
The Woodlands 77380
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www.LoveThatSmile.com

AUTOMOTIVE

Myron Heronema
Dealer Operator
Land Rover/Jaguar Houston Central

Q. *What does the new XJ say about the future of Jaguar designs?*

A. I think it says that Jaguar has moved on from the past and far into the 21st century. After the XK and XF, we've set the foundation for the future in terms of Jaguar design. From these two designs we had permission to design something special in the XJ. Jaguar has moved ahead of the times when it comes to combining elegance with performance.

Land Rover/Jaguar Houston Central
7019 Old Katy Road | Houston 77024
713.293.6100
www.jaguarhoustoncentral.com

fresh MEAT

James Silk (left) and Richard Knight, chefs and co-owners of Feast in Houston, "ham" it up for the camera inside their Sausage Room, where they store and cure everything from sausages, bacons and meats.

Photographed by Mark Lipczynski on April 29, 2010.

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- ☐ Increased body fat?
- ☐ Increased excercise to keep pounds off?
- ☐ Reduced sex drive
- ☐ Poor sleep quality?
- ☐ Sexual dysfunction?
- ☐ Mood swings?
- ☐ Thinning of skin/wrinkling?
- ☐ Decreased memory & concentration?
- ☐ Depression?

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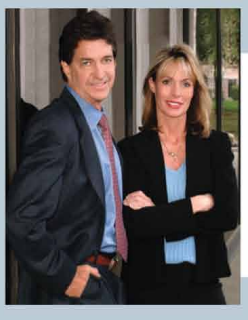

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